Integration in further education: a case study

Thesis

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INTEGRATION IN FURTHER EDUCATION:

A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

INTEGRATION IN FURTHER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

In this case study I examine the integration of students with physical disabilities into a college of further education over a period of five years.

In Section One issues in integration are examined as they relate to developments within the case study. The conventional model of integration, as outlined in the Warnock Report (1978), is challenged and an alternative perspective proposed.

In Section Two the provision for students with special needs in further education is described and evaluated. Research initiatives are examined in relation to current practice, and curriculum developments are assessed. The development of integration within the Youth Training Scheme is discussed and critically evaluated.

In Section Three the background to the case study is presented through an examination of integration schemes which were already established in the borough (which I call Harefield). The college (which I call Fraser College) is described before the pilot scheme of 1981 to 1982 is examined and assessed. At this stage I provide a retrospective picture of developments before I began to record the integration scheme in January 1983. Recent initiatives in Harefield for people with disabilities are described as they relate to developments in the case study.

In Section Four developments from January 1983 to April 1986 are described through my role as a participant in the scheme. I evaluate early errors, the development of a Bridging Course, the expansion of a new college (which I call Spencer College), the status of a disabled lecturer at Fraser College, developments in Harefield's Youth Training Scheme, experiences of lecturers and progress of students.

In Section Five I offer a new model of integration, examine prospects for integration in further education and make recommendations from the results of the case study development.

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TABLES

INTRODUCTION

In my introductory chapter I explain how I came to select this topic as my research area, discuss the terminology I employed and illustrate what I understand by specific theoretical terms. I examine the background context in which my case study was placed and outline the sequence in which it is to be discussed.

This is a case study of the integration of students with physical disabilities into a college of further education in a multi-racial London borough. I was engaged in gathering material for the study over a three year period as liaison Lecturer for students with special needs, a paid participant - observer. The integration scheme had been established two years prior to the research period, and I have also documented the development of these pilot years. For the purposes of this study, the London borough will be referred to as Harefield, and the college as Fraser College. All personal names used are fictitious.

The Topic

The topic of integration first interested me in 1980 when I was in a post as head of the special care department in Harefield's special school for children with severe learning difficulties. When the headteacher decided to introduce children from special care into the mainstream of the school, there was forceful resistance from the majority of staff. Those in what teachers thought of as the mainstream of the school suggested that they were ignorant of the needs of these children and that they would prove too demanding and distracting; the special care teachers were anxious to maintain their children on behaviour modification programmes or in regular physiotherapy and were reluctant to threaten the daily routine. I recorded the developments over two terms and became fascinated by the comple

process of integration, the heated emotions it engenders, and the difficulty in transferring sound theories into workable practice. It was clear how, even within the segregated special school, further divisions between pupils were sustained through a hierarchical concept of degrees of special need, and a fierce resistance to change.

I left this post in 1982 to work in Harefield's school for children with physical disabilities, referred to in the study as Hillcroft School. Integration from Hillcroft into local schools had been established for over ten years, so I was able to observe how this particular model of integration worked in practice. It had certain distinguishing features: it was a selective procedure, only the most academically able and emotionally stable children being considered. It existed on a tentative guest-host basis, the host mainstream school always retaining the power to reject the guest and the children in the scheme remaining on the special school register. It depleted the special school of its most stimulating pupils and of several senior staff, leaving only multiply-handicapped children behind for whom a modified curriculum had to be developed (Swann, 1987). I found myself questioning a form of integration which forced such marked divisions.

In January, 1983, I took up the appointment as liaison lecturer, responsible for students with physical disabilities, at Fraser College. An integration scheme, linking Hillcroft School and Fraser College, had been established since September, 1981. Hillcroft School had established links with primary and secondary schools, so the link with Fraser College, as the only college of further education in Harefield at that time, appeared to be a natural progression.

Finding myself in a position where I was able to observe and

record the development of a recently-established integration scheme, I embarked upon research as a participant-observer. As a full-time teacher, it was imperative that I could ensure my work provided my research topic for I would not have been able to collect data otherwise.

Terminology

Within the study I use the following terminology: special needs, disability, integration, equal opportunities, further education and whole school/college policy.

Special Needs

I would define any special need as being an extra requirement, beyond the standard norm. The implications of the word special are that additional services are sought. I consider it important to retain this concept when examining the 1981 Act's definition of special educational need as a learning difficulty whereby,

> ..A child has a learning difficulty if:
> (a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age;
> (b) he has a disability which prevents him from making use of educational facilities of the kind generally provided in schools in the LEA;..
> (Section 1 - The Education Act 1981)

Special needs , being additional requirements, relate more to the context in which they are defined than to the real needs of individuals. The 1981 Act definition implies that a special need is regarded as a deficit in the child who has a difficulty or disability : not a deficit in the system which serves all children and their educational needs. This is corroborated in the wide variations in what is considered to be a special need : some schools catering for a wide range of abilities and others for a narrow elite; some countries, notably Scandinavia and the United States, providing access for wheelchairs in educational premises whilst others regard a wheelchair as a special need in

itself.

Special needs come in graded categories, some more attractive than others. Those congenital disabilities, like cerebral palsy, spina bifida and Down's syndrome, which are instantly recognisable and place the individual in the role of victim are acceptable, worthy special needs: sufferers in need of support. Those more nebulous social categories - termed moderate learning difficulties or maladjusted - are regarded less as victims and more as threats to social order: deviants contaminating the system. Warnock's 2% of statemented children with special needs and 18% of children whose special needs are recognised but not statemented add to the confusion of definition. Special educational needs are a social construct relating to location, political and economic structure more than to individual need.

Disability

A disability is a more acceptable form of special need than many others, as illustrated by the increase of children with physical and sensory handicaps being integrated in contrast to the continued exclusion of other categories (Swann, 1985). A disability is also often associated with wheelchair-use, which creates a primary focus upon physical access, fire safety and toilet facilities rather than a concentration upon educational needs. The wheelchair image often becomes a stereotype for passive dependency and an able mind trapped in a disabled body . I reject a stereotype of disability as a dangerous generalisation which disregards the significant difference between congenital disabilities and those caused by later trauma (Reynell, 1974; Anderson, 1982).

Two contrasting examples will illustrate the confusion of this generalisation. Jane is a woman of twenty who experienced a

lack of oxygen at birth which has left her with quadreplegi cerebral palsy, that is, she is unable to use her arms or legs has to be changed, fed and lifted and is unable to talk o express her needs without patient understanding. It is difficul to know Jane's academic ability as her severe physical problem and long periods in hospital with chest infections have disturbe her schooling and her birth trauma might have damaged he learning skills. Josie, at the same age, has only beer disabled for two years following a road accident. Her back was damaged and she sustained spinal injury which will mean that she will spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair instead of enjoying her previous mobility. She was obviously deeply shocked and distressed but has been able to continue her studies and has started work in an office which has been adapted for her wheelchair.

Both Jane and Josie could be defined as being disabled , which clearly reveals the inadequacy of the term. They have completely different needs. If each were seeking educational facilities, Josie would only require access to a building which offered her the course she wanted while Jane would want welfare assistance and adapted resources, like Possum computers and Bliss symbols to communicate. She would also require a curriculum and teaching method which responded to her needs. Jane is not typical of all people with cerebral palsy: there are a wide range of abilities and needs among people with this handicap. Josie is not typical of all people with spinal injury: some people are able to do far more than others depending upon the nature of their damage.

The blanket term disability ignores those vital distinctions which clarify needs by overlooking the educational

implications of complex handicaps, the understanding of which is fundamental to successful integration (Male and Thompson, 1985).

Integration

The way in which I define the terms special needs and disability relates to my definition of integration. I cannot accept that notion of integration as an absorbtion of minority needs into majority culture. Perhaps we should reject the very word mainstreaming with its emphasis upon one dominant current of momentum. This ignores the interest and diversion of tributary directions. In order to foster genuine integration there has to be an acceptance and appreciation of the differences in people. The concept of integration described within the Warnock Report is of three graded stages of assimilation (Warnock, 1978, 7.6-7.61 p.100). This is a negative approach to integration as it focuses upon the need of the individual to adapt rather than on the system to change. It also illustrates the rigidity of many curriculum frameworks in distinguishing social and functional integration as if schools were not concerned with social development as an integral part of the curriculum.

I prefer Pocklington's suggestion that,

> ..integration is no longer something ascribed to a minority outgroup but may be construed instead as a challenge facing ordinary schools - requiring that they adapt to the differences in the interests and capabilities of their pupils by differentiating the curriculum on offer..
> (Pocklington, 1983, p.11)

The Fish Report, unlike its predecessor, recognises this challenge to mainstream education and opens a debate on the quality of education for the broad range of children (Fish, 1985). The political nature of integration is acknowledged as being potentially threatening to the status quo (Fraser, 1984, Gurney, 1985). Integration must refer to curriculum relevance,

which has come under critical attack in recent years (Golby Mullen & Stewart, 1984). Where pupils are recipients of curriculum irrelevant to their needs, they cannot be said to b integrated: the curriculum itself is rejecting them.

It should be a basic right for all children to be offere the same educational opportunities, and to participate within the same institutional operation, in so far as their abilities allow. This is not to imply that all children have equal skills: that is patently not true. It is, however, a sign of an integrated society if a sharing of experience, a co-operative unity, is the right of all. Whilst the Education Act, 1981, was supposed to compensate for the ineffective stance adopted within the Warnock Report, it offers such provisos as render it morally reprehensible. Under the Act, a child cannot be integrated within a mainstream school unless the following conditions are met:

> (a) the child must receive the special educational provision he requires,
> (b) the education of other children with whom he is educated must not be adversely affected;
> (c) it is compatible with efficient use of resources.
> (The Education Act 1981. Section 2.)

Just as the definition of special educational need within the Act placed the onus on the child with a disability to comply with what existed, or be prevented from participation, so this concept of integration suggests that variables like appropriate educational provision and adequate resources will constitute conditions for integration. This turns integration into an administrative convenience rather than an ideology.

If, as I believe, integration is a moral rather than a practical issue, then the provisos offered in the Education Act should be challenged. They imply that, far from being a battle won, the campaigners are still having to fight on every front to

maintain the impetus of their cause.

Equal Opportunities

The concept of equal opportunities is a political issu and, as such, is inevitably complex and ambiguous. As I hav suggested, in my definition, integration is by no mean provided as of right but has involved lengthy and turbulen struggles in which the more articulate the protagonists the more likely a successful outcome will ensue. The integration of children with special needs into educational participation and of adults with special needs into community participation can be viewed alongside civil rights issues of the past in which women fought for the right to vote, blacks for the right to share transport and schooling and homosexuals for the right to fulfill a private life without threat of imprisonment. These civil right issues invariably require legislation in order to support minority claims for, without such force, minorities are powerless. Such legislation might be regarded by some members of the majority culture as being a constricting form of positive discrimination which favours the minority at the expense of the majority. I consider that some form of positive discrimination is an essential component of any equal opportunities policy in order to counteract the effect of years of destructive discrimination. In educational terms, this positive discrimination should foster a policy of equal opportunities for all members of society to gain maximum benefit from the available educational provision and to influence the development of this provision in order to counteract the barriers of disadvantage and disability.

In order to create a climate which fosters equal opportunities, the concepts inherent in the 1981 Act have to be challenged: it may suit some schools to enforce a curriculum and

ethos which deliberately excludes an unwelcome minority (Galloway and Goodwin, 1979; Tomlinson, 1981). The wording of the Act leaves such a stance unchallenged, in its emphasis upon the child's deficiency. The implication, in the Act, that disability in itself serves as an agent of exclusion is one that is being fervently confronted by the politically aware campaigners within the disabled minority, demanding genuine equality of opportunity (Finkelstein, 1981).

Further Education

Ostensibly, further education , as the responsive, non-compulsory, post-school form of educational provision, should be the most integrated and offer greatest equality of opportunities for it is not hampered by a constricting ethos or curriculum guidelines. Every course should be purpose-designed to suit the needs of the students taking it and the consumers - the students - should decide what educational provision they require and demand service. Yet there are no examples of integration schemes being used as models of good practice from further education, despite the mass of curriculum innovation in course provision designed specifically for students with special needs.

I will discuss the historical development and recent changes in further education in the background section to the case study, but I will define it firstly as it relates to the earlier stages of educational provision. There has been a wealth of literature produced on integration schemes in junior and secondary schools, especially the former, yet little on integration in further education. If size of population and environment equates with the level of participation available, then it is not difficult to perceive why integration works most successfully within infant and junior schools. A primary school might have as few as 200

children in total; a comprehensive is unlikely to have fewer than 900; a college of further education will often have as many as 4,000 students, many of them part-time.

As the case study will illustrate, integration is primarily about participation, and participation requires a corporate identity such that every member of the community feels valued within it. Infant schools are designed to cater for individual differences and generally operate within an informal structure, without academic curriculum restrictions. Junior schools have a similar ethos, but tend to set specific academic objectives which require that all children achieve certain goals before they move on. Secondary schools have been confined by the examination schedule and syllabus guidelines such that they often have difficult in accommodating a wide range of ability within the same groups, especially in the fifth years. The size of these respective forms of educational provision means that the average junior school, often single storey and compact, will be easier to adapt for children in wheelchairs, than a large, several storey and split-site, comprehensive school. Common to most school communities, however, is an overall ethos, supported by a pastoral care system, regular assemblies and staff meetings.

Further education differs markedly from the earlier forms of educational provision. Unlike school, it is optional, as educational attendance is only compulsory until the age of sixteen in Britain. Further education colleges cater for people of all ages, from sixteen upwards, and, because of the optional nature of their provision, they have to be consumer-orientated and market their courses. Whilst secondary schools can establish courses in subject areas, in the knowledge that they will be run, staff in colleges can find that a course which recruits well one year will have too few numbers to run at all the following year.

Operating within a market economy, many colleges tend to focu upon course provision which is highly competitive and establishe their prestige among other colleges. This can leave the needs o minority groups neglected, as such course provision will prove expensive without carrying high prestige. The experience within the case study will illustrate this dilemma.

It is extremely difficult to establish any central ethos and corporate identity within a college of further education, especially when it is very large and on several sites, as is often the case. Departments tend to work quite separately, and the opportunities for all staff in the college to come together for discussion and dissemination of information are rare. Written bulletins may impart information, but they cannot allow the opportunity for discussion, detailed information and explanation, which I would regard as the hallmark of a whole-institutional approach . Adapting buildings for students in wheelchairs can become both complex and costly when there are many sites built over a number of years, without consideration of the needs of the disabled.

Despite their role as accessible places of learning, in the sense that they are designed to cater for a wide range of abilities and skills, many colleges of further education are most inaccessible in appearance, atmosphere and approach. This is because, without a corporate identity, it is nobody's college: there is no spirit of belonging to an institution, as in many schools, but simply of attending a department. Corridors tend to be bleak and litter-strewn, and staff and students in different departments rarely meet or become acquainted with each other. Vandalism and theft often become a problem, and staff and students rarely wish to assume responsibility for the

preservation of standards, as they feel no sense of belonging.

Clearly, if integration is about the level of participation which is allowed, then integration into further education must be the most difficult challenge to tackle. Where students and staff generally are passive participants in their college, there can be little hope that students with special needs will become active participants. In the case study I will illustrate how Fraser College typified this problem, whilst Spencer College, the name I give to the new college in Harefield, was able to grow from a small, cohesive community, sharing a central ethos, and thus avoid the dilemma of much further education provision.

Whole school/college policy

Through the course of the case study, I indicate that a whole school or whole college policy is required in order to sustain integration and foster equal opportunities. I use this term to differentiate between cohesive, long-term commitment to a policy and that casual agreement between the head of one educational institution and another which often ignites an integration scheme . Such informal unions, maintained within the hierarchy and not reached through group discussion, tend to be based on goodwill and personality blends which are then open to abuse and diffusion when these individuals leave or follow new interests. A policy, if it is to foster change, has to be seen by the community in which it is to be applied as a part of each member's work commitment and a shared responsibility. A policy of integrating students with special needs, fostering equal opportunities and combating racism and sexism may not be viewed with enthusiasm by all staff. Some may regard such a policy as an imposition which threatens the status quo.

The desirability of a whole school and whole college policy can be seen in relation to the oppression model which

undermines any policy for equal opportunities. There is nc chance for equal opportunities when minority groups experience sustained and debilitating oppression - in their social status, political power, employment prospects and educational progress. An acknowledgement of that oppression and its long-term impact has to preceed any genuine effort to create an equal opportunities policy. Where an educational institution displays an overt commitment to an integration or equal opportunities policy by clearly stating its ethos and publishing a policy statement, offering staff training in awareness of the relevant issues, enabling all members of the community to share decision-making and curriculum development and valuing all members for the different perspectives they present, there is a strength of purpose which far outweighs the casual arrangement between senior administrators.

Although it has become a commonly-used term, in relation to successful integration schemes, a whole school/college policy is more complex than it might appear. In order to maintain such a united front and to continually develop equal opportunities and counteract inequalities, there has to be a balance between a directed democracy and a benevolent dictatorship. Such an approach can risk becoming yet another form of oppression, which stifles individualism in the guise of overall cohesion. In my concluding section (Section V, Chapter 24) I will evaluate the impact of a whole college policy upon one specific institution and its locality.

Context

My research is set within the context of literature relating to developments for students with special needs in further education. This has expanded considerably through the 1980s, as

the influx of students with special educational needs into further education has gained momentum. Two research projects of critical importance to the justification of such provision, were published in 1982. Jowett (1982) illustrated the need for increased further education opportunity for young disabled people, and Newton and Robinson (1982) demonstrated the value of further education for students leaving special schools, in particular those with moderate learning difficulties. These were of critical importance because they demonstrated both the paucity of provision and the relevance of further education to a group who had been hitherto excluded from any chance of post-16 educational provision. Special schools for students with moderate learning difficulties had, until the late 1970s, been able to develop links with local firms such that most school leavers could gain some form of employment. With the expansion of unemployment in the 1980s this opportunity evaporated and the plight of this group of school leavers became apparent. Colleges of further education, many of which were losing traditional areas of work through the effects of the recession, were responsive to this new area, but needed support and guidance in curriculum innovation, as there was no previous further education resource which related directly to the needs of these students. It is not surprising, therefore, that the greatest volume of research in this field has been related to curriculum development and staff training.

In 1981 Bradley and Hegarty examined the range of students with special educational needs in further education, as this was still a relatively recent phenomenon. In 1982, in Stretching the System , they indicated how the needs of these students, varying widely in skills, interests and learning patterns, were not being met within existing provision. In 1984, Dee produced a

practical guide, aptly termed Routes to Coping , which offered ways in which different lecturers who worked with students with moderate learning difficulties, had approached content and teaching method. Again in 1984, Dean and Hegarty focused upon curriculum development and teaching method for people with severe learning difficulties, including those within adult training centres, to become termed social education centres . This research indicates the broadening net which has spread since Jowett's research. It had always been acceptable for students with physical or sensory impairment, who could follow mainstream course provision, to enter further education. Jowett indicated that such provision as existed was grossly inadequate to meet the needs of all within this broad category. Newton and Robinson introduced the concept of a new type of student in further education, a student who needed a modified curriculum and adapted teaching method. Hegarty and Bradley investigated the curriculum developments within colleges nationally and found provision to be ad hoc and variable. Both Routes to Coping and Learning for Independance (Dean and Hegarty, 1984) are prescriptive, action-research projects, which were widely disseminated to influence technique and curriculum design nationally.

In 1985 came the publication of the most comprehensive and expansive research project in this field to date, the DES and FEU sponsored From Coping to Confidence staff-training package. Whilst the DES claims this does not attempt to be prescriptive but only to extend information nationally, its elaborate and wide-spread dissemination has been most influential in developing course provision for students with moderate and severe learning difficulties. Cooper's A College Guide: Meeting Special Educational Needs , published in 1986, recognises the need for a

whole-college approach and for increased staff awareness, so that the responsibility for students with special needs does not rest solely with special needs tutors. To this end, each type of disability is clearly explained, without the use of jargon, and the complexities of needs are described. The Guide attempts to explain the educational implications of different disabilities, illustrate these with case studies, and break damaging stereotypes in the process. I consider that Cooper's Guide is the nearest yet to a focus upon integration within further education, as it attempts to share background knowledge with all college staff, rather than examine curriculum initiatives with the few specialities, as in previous research.

The Focus

Where does my research fit into this pattern of research in the 1980s? It is not quantitative, to offer a national perspective, as that of Bradley, Hegarty and Dean. It is not focusing upon curriculum development and teaching method, as is the bulk of recent research, but only refers to curriculum and teaching method as they relate to the integration scheme. I feel that it illuminates issues which Cooper's Guide indicates: those of the educational implications of complex handicaps; the damaging effects of narrow stereotyping; and the need for increased awareness among all staff, through a whole-college approach. My intention is to do more that illuminate these issues however.

I am offering a critical examination of a specific and prevelant model of integration: that of the placement model, as defined by the Warnock Report and sustained by the wording of the Education Act 1981. I will examine examples of such models within primary and secondary education, before illuminating a placement model of integration within further education. The

case study will indicate the weaknesses inherent in this model, and the problems which ensue.

I will also demonstrate how the concept of integration is inextricably associated with the level of participation available by illustrating, through the case study, the complex web of community and institutional links which comprise such a development. In describing one specific scheme, in one locality, within one college with its own peculiar history, I will indicate how integration cannot be regarded as a host-guest uncommitted arrangement, but must involve the complete and unconditional commitment of the whole community.

Research of integration in schools, notably that of Anderson and Cope (1977) and Hegarty and Pocklington (1981), has tended to offer a quantitive perspective, whilst examining issues which teachers and parents have highlighted, or problems which children have demonstrated. I intend, in offering a detailed account of one scheme over a period of five years, to present the ambiguities and complexities of implementing an integration scheme in its context. The institution and the borough are examined in relation to the development of the scheme. I consider it important to focus upon the quality of provision, now that we have reached a stage when the quantity is greatly improved. I conducted my research through a period of dramatic expansion of further education provision for students with special needs. I offer it as an example of that expansion, implemented in haste, with a painful teething-period and frustrating progression. It might be unique to its time and place, but in the labyrinth of difficulties I would regard it as typical of such a model, and, as such, of interest to LEAs and other Colleges. It is used, as an example of recent developments in the mainstream, in the Open University publication Curricula

For All (1987).

Case Study Presentation

The case study is approached by moving in from the general to the particular: from an examination of background issues relating to the topic of integration to a discussion of developments in further education for students with special educational needs to an assessment of developments within the borough in which the case study is sited, before an ultimate focus upon the integration process within the specific college. My intention, in gradually narrowing the focus of the research, is to clarify those issues which are featured in the case study and which typify similar integration schemes generally. Without a thorough examination of those issues which relate to the process of integration to be illustrated in the case study the developments might be regarded as so unusual as to have no relevance to general borough policies and integration schemes. In order to set it in context, I present the research in the following sequence, divided into five sections.

SECTION ONE: Issues in Integration

In this section I offer an alternative approach to the notion of integration as placement which I regard as an unfortunate and impeding legacy of the 1978 Warnock Report.

Section One examines: those barriers to integration which are prevelant in all developments; the impact of recent innovations in community provision and subsequent influence on educational developments; the constraints which assimilation into existing educational provision impose; alternative approaches to integration which challenge the conventional model.

SECTION TWO: Students with Special Needs in Further Education

In Section Two I place the case study in the context of general developments in further education. I indicate the

characteristic features of further education and illustrate how colleges have to respond to locality, historical growth and policy development. I offer examples of contrasting colleges which typify those examined in the case study. Recent research publications are assessed in relation to the work of average colleges and the critical role of model colleges as innovators is described. The work of the Further Education Unit is discussed and its impact on general developments assessed. The assimilation of students with special needs into further education is related to the general educational trend of physically and sensorily handicapped children and young people being the special needs group selected for integration. the emphasis upon curriculum development within special courses for students with learning difficulties is discussed in relation to course flexibility. Finally, the impact of integration in the Youth Training Scheme is evaluated.

SECTION THREE: An Introduction to the Case Study

This Section focuses upon the Borough of Harefield, in which the case study is placed. Whilst being unique in its specific history, economic and social development, Harefield also typifies other urban, multi-racial boroughs and reflects many of the issues discussed in Section One and Two. In this Section I describe the growth and development of other integration schemes in the borough which were established before the scheme to be assessed in the case study. This enables me to gain some perception of Harefield's policy on integration and to learn from established programmes. I describe Fraser College of Technology, its location, history and ethos. The pilot project to integrate students with disabilities into Fraser College is described from reports and evaluations presented by my predecessor. This was developing from 1981 until 1983, at the same time as several

initiatives for people with disabilities. The hostel and day centre which opened in 1983 are described in relation to their implications for community needs.

SECTION FOUR: Integrating Students with Physical Disabilities into a College of Further Education, 1983-1986

Section Four contains the case study itself, which is an examination of my own experience of an integration scheme in further education, over a three year period.

In this Section I examine: my liaison in the college and community in my first term, from January to July, 1983; the first year of Bridging Course, established to suit students with special needs, 1983 to 1984; the development of the new Spencer College, a community college which was opened in 1983 and positively discriminated for students with special needs; the experiences of a lecturer at Fraser College who became disabled and returned to the college community with a different identity; the process of integrating students with a range of special needs into the Harefield Youth Training Scheme; the expansion of provision from 1983 to 1985 and the changes which were to influence developments; finally, I describe students' progress from 1983 to 1986 and evaluate their response.

SECTION FIVE: Conclusion

In this concluding Section, I reverse the focus of the study, which has moved from the general to the particular, by returning to a broad perspective. I suggest a model of integration which offers an alternative approach to the conventional pattern. I return to a general examination of developments in further education by assessing future prospects for integration. The case study is evaluated in the light of my reflections and conclusions drawn. Finally, recommendations are made and this specific case study used to clarify general issues.

APPROACHING THE CASE STUDY

In this background chapter, I discuss my methodology and the complexities it entailed. I examine those features which characterise qualitative research and explain the difficulties of the dual role of participant and researcher, including the process of recording through the use of a diary and of interviewing and transcribing from key informants. The problems which arose with this methodology are assessed and their impact on the result is evaluated.

When embarking on my research I assumed, like many other students before me, that the essential ingredient of all research was statistical measurement. As I began to record the complexities, ambiguities and contradictions within the integration scheme, I realised that a statistical approach would fail to uncover those layers of discovery which formed the substance of my study. I could quantify the number of students with disabilities who came into the college, noting their level of academic success and the number of those with similar disabilities but this said little of their experience of the integration process both within the college and wider community. My methodology had to enable me to examine the quality of individual experiences and to illuminate issues both in the immediate locality and in the broader context of national developments. As Gordon Bell (1985) explains, these

> ..questions of value, the heartland of educational inquiry, cannot be gazed upon and science depends upon observation. Thus a reliance on rigour in critical method, as distinct from a dependence on science, provides the logical foundations of practitioner case study. (Bell, 1985, p.180).

Bell describes this critical method as revealing relations and enabling others to evaluate their practical meaning (p.180). In this respect, such research must be illuminative through

clarifying the complexities which exist between theory and practice and indicating the need to observe educational developments within the context of their historical and political background.

Revealing relations

In my case study I used the tools at my disposal - records of meeting, documents, interviews and diary notes - to piece together what I found to be a most complex and ultimately unsatisfactory operation of the integration procedure. Yet, purely quantative measurement would have implied that the scheme was successful: by 1985, there were more students in wheelchairs in the college than in any other London college. Superficial counting of heads was irrelevant to the under-lying conflicts. Like Schostak (1983), in his study of deviant behaviour in a comprehensive school, I needed to,

> ..peer under the stones and reveal the hidden social and personal content that resides there..
> (Schostak, 1983, p.29)

An example of where peering under the stones was profitable was in my investigation into the history of the Community Unit which was the one special needs section of Fraser College.

Any outsider who enters a new situation with a specific role to play will take some time to assess the historical events which have created the relationships and policies within that environment. I entered a situation which I had only heard about from the outside, as a member of staff in the special school, Hillcroft, and in which I was indoctrinated by senior administrators, like the college vice principal, to take sides in policy issues. I was also in a position where I was moving from the intimate shelter of a special school into the vast anonimity of a further education college. In my initial anxiety,

I was eager to be supported and directed by senior adminstrators and was apprehensive of the members of the NATFHE lecturers' Union who had gained adverse publicity in Harefield for their reluctance to allow students in wheelchairs onto inadequate premises. My preoccupation in the special school had been with the senior pupils and their daily needs. I had to adjust my perceptions to learn the complex political manoeuvres of further education. When I started at the college, I did not understand why members of the Community Unit were so hostile towards the Principal and so uncooperative in dealing with the students in wheelchairs. It was not until I had investigated, through consultation with several widely different sources, the Unit's history of segregation, separate ethos and contrasting educational philosophy, that I could understand the conflicts and sympathise with the protagonists.

Only in a method which probes under surface facts into the complex and problematic waters beneath can submerged evidence be revealed and investigated. This has to take place over a period of time, time in which the fluidity of interaction can be experienced by the participant-observer, immersed in the situation.

Davies (1984) refers to individuals playing their roles within an institutional drama, roles in which they can become fixed caricatures, representative of specific attitudes and values. On a superficial level, it is easy to accept these presentations and assume that they reflect genuine feelings. However, over a period of time during which I grew to admire and enjoy a range of characters, superficial impressions were shown to be unreliable. I refer in the case study to a character whom I call Maggie Major . As head of the Community Unit, Maggie was an influential figure in terms of developing the integration

scheme, for without her support I could not use the valuable facilities of the Unit for students with disabilities. My initial reaction to her was one of distaste and frustration, for she refused to let students in wheelchairs attend ground floor Art classes on the (what I considered) spurious ground that they were a fire risk. She was a flamboyant, vivid figure, highly intelligent and articulate and a powerful influence on college politics. I was unwilling to enter into conflict with her so decided that I would seek other sources of support. Had my research ended after six months, I would have retained an impression of Maggie as a hard-hearted, calculating politician, only interested in what she could get out of people and situations. However, during the course of my second year at the college, Maggie contacted me to warn me that a student I had interviewed and provisionally accepted was highly unsuitable as he had a criminal record which included sexual abuse and he would be a most inappropriate companion for the students with physical handicaps who came from Hillcroft special school. I had been given no report on the student and, without Maggie's warning, would have taken him. Whether I should have taken him or not is another issue, but it is Maggie's behaviour I am concerned with here. She found out about the situation through other sources and sought me out to assist me. There was no political gain to be made. Months later we were working together on a committee, in which I could see her tremendous commitment to the students she served.

I use this example to illustrate the value of lengthy participant-observation, in which interaction can reveal unexpected dimensions to characters and increase understanding of situations.

Terminology

The notion of what constitutes integration remains nebulous: I see it as a process, not a placement. This directly influences my methodology for placement can be investigated through quantitative research but a process requires a more subtle analysis of practice. It is useful to compare my case study with another similar approach in which this subtle analysis is illustrated. When Tuula Gordon approached her study of progressivism in a comprehensive school, she decided that

> ..The elusiveness of progressivism, and the contradictions it entailed, rendered the case study an appropriate method through which to conduct an in-depth investigation to illuminate such concerns. A case study also enabled the longitudinal perspective, necessary because it allowed the consideration of effects of restructuring, and because it allowed for the specific interplay between theory and fieldwork, which helped to overcome problems of participant observation in providing insights into the object of study beyond the micro-level.
> (Gordon, 1985, p.516)

Integration is similarly elusive and requires both in-depth investigation and a longitudinal perspective in order to illuminate the complexity of those issues involved.

Playing a role

Whilst I regard the qualitative approach as being the most appropriate method of writing a case study, my choice of research methodology was governed by my circumstances. As Davies (1984) acknowledged,

> ..any chosen methodology of research is the result of two sometimes conflicting factors: what one wants to find out and the means at one's disposal to do it.
> (Davies, 1985, p.211)

I could not preserve a role as external researcher when I held a post within the college in which I was expected to develop inter-departmental relations, extend community liaison and take responsibility as course tutor and counsellor for students with disabilities.

There was no opportunity for me to assume an observer's position for, from the start of my research/job, I was engaged in a high-tension drama in which my role appeared to be a combination of trouble-shooter , peace-maker and knight errant. The scenario was outlined at interview, when the Vice Principal told all eight candidates that whoever was offered the post was entering a difficult situation, where there was conflict between Union and Management and where feelings were heated. He made no attempt to make light of the stress and implied that it would include antagonism from the Union. This must have been disconcerting for all candidates, none of whom apart from myself had worked within the borough. My further preparation for this role included the warning from the head of Hillcroft (the special school in which I was teaching at the time of my interview and which was the link school for the integration scheme) that, were she in my position, she wouldn't touch it (the job) with a barge-pole . Colleagues from the school viewed my decision with amazement, being generally convinced that Fraser College was filled with animosity.

Taking on this part, while knowing the minefield I was entering, says something about me and my attitude to work. I have spent short periods in contrasting, difficult jobs: with disturbed, psychotic adolescents, in a special care unit and in a temporary post involving the integration of children with physical handicaps. It was the latter which propelled me to the job at the college, for I had left the special care position to escape being stereotyped and had to find a stage beyond the temporary post I had filled at Hillcroft School. My urge to have challenge and novelty in work experience obviously influenced my approach to the job and research, in that I accepted and anticipated a measure of stress and retained an air of fascinated

detachment.

Within the role, my personality inevitably affected social interaction and the subsequent development of integration. I resist confrontation, like to be liked and will come more than half way to meet colleagues if it avoids conflict. This self-appraisal is not drawn to attract applause (however fitting this analogy might be to taking part in a drama). It is drawn to illustrate the tension of the dual role of lecturer and researcher. I was researching a drama in which I was playing a leading role, directing the action and stage managing the entrances and exits. The intimacy of my relationship within the case study led me to seek an inappropriately objective and scientific approach, leaning on factual evidence quite outside my immediate influence.

However, there were established features of the study which assisted my research: the drama had been progressing since September 1981 and the climax and high drama of the Autumn term of 1982 had occured before my entrance. Therefore these were events which I could record and evaluate but had had no influence on their direction. When I entered the drama the protagonists were already well established in their roles and acted them with conviction. In any institutional drama Davies (1984) suggests that

> ..these scripts will be experimented with, adapted, crystallised or shelved, depending on the technical performance of the actors and the dialogue preferences of those in control.
>
> (Davies, 1984, p.123)

The technical performance of characters like Maggie Major was impressively powerful, but belied their true status. Although she effectively held centre-stage for much of the drama, and even held the Principal to ransom at one stage, the dialogue

preferences of those in control banished her to a peripheral role on the appointment of an acceptable outsider to fill her part, although she had played it efficiently for two years while the original post-holder was on secondment. She found another role elsewhere and the drama developed a different focus. Davies (1984) indicates that any institution becomes a community of caricatures (p.54) and these characters will have their fixed expressions. Maggie Major's line is, What's in it for us? Yet, I found her prepared to offer valuable advice which was of no benefit to her Unit. As Davies suggests, she will don a mask to play out the drama (p.54) but show another face in private.

From January 1983 I was involved in an action which had to be constantly reinterpreted in the light of changing perceptions, for

> ..people in interaction are not just giving expression to background factors in forming their respective lines of action, but are directing, checking, bending and transforming their scripts in the light of what they encounter in the action of others. The networks that compromise an institution are not static fields of interaction, but constantly shifting eddies..

Among these participants, I was constantly transforming my script. My part within the actions I recorded influenced the perception I had and the interpretation I gave. As I gained increased understanding, I could decide how to precipitate actions or to subdue effects.

The disadvantage of my dual role was that I was deeply concerned to develop good relationships with the mainstream lecturers with whom I was working. This meant that, as a researcher, I was inclined to gather data which presented positive attitudes rather than focus upon hostility and conflicts. When discussing the difficulties which developed in the scheme, I tended to focus on group identity rather than individual behaviour. As a member of the college staff myself, I

found it extremely difficult to apply critical judgement upon a fellow-practitioner. It only served to make me aware of my own inadequacies and I preferred to seek the reason behind any examples of poor practice. Stenhouse (1981) recognises this conflict between the role of researcher and participant,

> ..I must concede that there are forbidden areas for most teacher researchers, and that these are mainly where the exposure of persons and personal relations is at stake. (Stenhouse, 1981, pp.103-114)

As a liaison officer I was expected to develop links with relevant internal and extended agencies which inhibited my flexibility as a researcher. The diplomacy inherent in the role dissipated the tension which might otherwise have surfaced.

The value of the dual role was that the one supported the other and kept me sane. As researcher, I was able to step back and evaluate events which had been stressful to me as participant. Thus, when I was experiencing frustration, disappointment or conflict, as a result of my liaison role, I could rationalise attitudes and developments. Stress was diffused through an analysis of the underlying reasons. Correspondingly, the lecturer role (the image I chose by nature of my personality) whereby good working relationships were established with the Union, mainstream lecturers, welfare assistants and caretakers made research easier. If I had been in constant conflict my energy would have been engaged in other areas than coping with the dual role, which allowed time to record progress. How much I decided to smooth troubled waters in order to get on quietly with research or was able to combine research and practice because I was a natural peace-maker, I cannot say.

Keeping a diary

I kept a diary from January 1983 until April 1986, which was

valuable on several levels. It served as a factual record, giving time, date and duration of meetings and specific events affecting student, staff and policy decisions. The inclusions gave a picture of the diversity and complexity of my role and the many facets which it entailed. It also served to absorb my emotional reactions to people and events and reveal how I felt at that exact time. This was important as the diary would indicate how my feelings changed as I learnt more about the reasons behind people's behaviour and as my interaction with the institutional framework altered.

The diary preserved a record of my own integration into the college community, although I would regard this as never achieving the level of participation which was required to give equal status to students with disabilities. This is, therefore, not only a case study of the integration of students with disabilities but of a teacher from a small, sheltered special school into a large, mainstream setting, in which I found,

> ..so many identical corridors. Lecturers in one department don't speak to those in another. I get lost going from one section to another. I don't understand the politics and feel out of it altogether..
> (Diary, February 1983)

The diary describes my gradual absorbtion into the politics of the community whilst, at the same time, illustrating the peripheral nature of my liaison role.

I use the diary to record a wide range of events and emotions in the college body - not all directly related to students with disabilities but with staff and students in general. After the Cultural Awareness Day in July 1985, I recorded the response of staff: apathy from some; anger at the poor quality of debate from others; hostility towards the concept of equal opportunities from others. In December 1985, I watched the Christmas Concert:

> ..unlike the audience of Cultural Awareness Day the hall was packed, people standing four deep in the corridor outside. The audience was about 75% West Indian and Asian students. The worst acts were embarrassingly feeble and performed by white lecturers. The audience were tolerant but bored. The mood changed dramatically when an Asian girl performed what was evidently a well-known traditional dance. Many members of the audience were following each sequence and applauding the end of each section, cheering excitedly. The performance was polished and professional and the audience rapturously attentive. The response to a rapping dance by two West Indian boys was very enthusiastic.
> (Diary, December 1985)

Reading through these notes at the end of the year, I could not help observing the gap between the damp squib of the Cultural Awareness Day and the vitality and culture of the concert, a cultural richness which remained submerged within the dominant ethos of the college community.

My diary recorded the riots of 1985 which had a significant impact on students and staff. Although I did not know any students who were directly involved, I was told of police harrassment in the locality. One of my evening students, a West Indian single parent who lived on the estate where the riot took place, told me that her neighbours were woken in the middle of the night, not allowed to dress before being taken to the police station where their thirteen year old son was questioned in just his boxer shorts. I comment in my diary, Would owner-occupier, white, middle-class residents of the grander areas of Harefield be treated in this way? Another of my students, a very reliable, sixteen year old West Indian boy, said one of his cousins was stopped by the police at night, had his headlight kicked in, and was then prosecuted for driving an unroadworthy car. For several days after the riots the atmosphere between black and white students in the college was tense. In the student journal, the editor, a lecturer who lives in the

locality, asked if any staff understood what it was like to spend a summer in that area, with the squalor and tension on the streets. Most staff drive home to outer, residential suburbs. These observations served to give me a feel of the community and its underlying tensions.

Although I used my diary to record events and to ensure that I recalled the sequence of developments, I make infrequent use of it in the final text. It was not until I had completed the case study and reflected upon it some time later that I realised it would have been far more interesting and lively had I trusted to the diary to tell much of the story. My inadequate use of the diary indicates how the final text evolved. I started by feeling convinced that, in order to be an effective researcher, I had to maintain a certain detachment from my subject matter. I used the diary to draw on information which I could then incorporate into the text, where possible measuring it against written documents or external reports. It was because I was unsure of the case study method and the use of qualitative evaluation that I kept changing my style of recording events, always trying to present an objective picture. In my effort to remove all traces of the personal from the study I was only succeeding in making it less and less readable. It was not until I had reflected on the study, in the light of what I had learnt from the experience of doing it, that I knew how much more I should have relied upon the diary. Had I started the case study with the confidence in my own judgements with which I ended it, the result would have drawn much more extensively on the diary extracts.

Key Informants

Throughout the study a number of individuals contributed a disproportionate amount to the narrative. These were my key informants. They included a lecturer who became disabled, who I

call Molly Francis ; my welfare assistants, Mary and Kathy ; the training workshop manager and new head of the Community Unit and, above all, the senior lecturer for special needs at Spencer College, Mary Cahill . From 1974, she was one of the original liaison teachers working in the scheme between Hillcroft Special School and Norcross Comprehensive, as well as experiencing the disastrous scheme which preceeded it. From September 1983, she was performing the role of senior lecturer responsible for students with special needs at the newly opened Spencer College, in Harefield. Through her perceptions and first-hand experience, I was able to gain an impression of the development of integration within Harefield's educational institutions. I was fortunate to be able to gain insight from someone who had been at the beginning of both a school and college integration programme in the borough. Although Mary could not offer information on the developments at Fraser College, other than her reflections on the pilot year which had become a source of gossip within the borough network, she was able to give me an overall picture into which developments at Fraser College would be drawn into sharp focus. Mary's information and evaluation clarified the way in which the scheme had been established and progressed.

I interviewed Mary on four occasions, for between half an hour and an hour each time. From these transcripts, I selected extracts to illustrate the development of integration in the borough, the lack of policy in the school schemes and attempt at an equal opportunity policy in the new college. I found it easy to talk to Mary of the problems I was encountering and she shared her own experiences. The parallels which could be drawn between her difficulties in school schemes and mine in the college scheme illuminated the weakness of a lack of borough policy which permits the perpetuation of poor practice. Using a

key informant who worked outside Fraser College enabled me to use Mary as a confidant, which I sorely needed. It also made me uninhibited about asking questions of borough practice which L.E.A. officers themselves would have been either unwilling or unable to discuss.

Whereas Mary had worked for over ten years in the borough, largely within integration schemes as a liaison teacher, this continuity was lacking among administrative officers. The post of A.E.O for Special Needs had become a stepping-stone position, having seen five different holders in seven years from 1980 onwards. Consequently, when I interviewed the A.E.O. for Special Needs in 1984, I was told, F.E. is a grey area I know little about , and the new A.E.O. in 1985, being introduced to the scheme's history, wondered it was ever set up to begin with, with Spencer College on the horizon. Neither of these informants could be regarded as valuable sources of information and evaluation, in comparison to a teacher like Mary. Each successive A.E.O. had barely time to grasp the complexities of the incoherent special needs policy before moving on.

One actor in this drama who would have been a first-hand informant was the Special Needs Adviser who had been directly instrumental in establishing the scheme. However, I felt inhibited to interview him as I already knew, from his public pronouncements, that his perceptions of the scheme bore little relation to mine. He declared, at a public meeting in February 1983, that the Union were the villains of the piece for protesting at conditions, for if only the disabled students were allowed to attend the college and the existing courses they would be proved to cope. His simplistic approach probably hid a profound guilt in being responsible for the scheme yet not providing for it. From January 1983, when I arrived after so

much trauma in the scheme, he came to the college only once, and that was in June 1985, to obliquely reprimand me after H.M.I. had presented a damning report to the office. Although we had asked him to attend college meetings and come to advise on curriculum issues, staff training and lack of resources, he always declined with an excuse. My decision not to formally interview him in these circumstances arose, as much as anything, from my frustration at his apparent apathy. His words to me after the H.M.I. visit were revealing, however:

> ..I've had sleepless nights over this one..sat up in the middle of the night, knowing we did it all wrong..

Perhaps he would not have said this in a formal interview but only in a situation where he was ostensibly telling me where I went wrong.

In 1983 I interviewed the training workshop manager, who had started at the same time as I did. She was in a particularly vulnerable position within the Unit and felt very threatened by Maggie Major. Her perceptions saw the management, in the form of the Vice Principal, as being supportive and a sanctuary from her aggressors. Apart from having discussions about students, I never formally interviewed Maggie Major. This was partly because she played a centre-stage role in which her feelings were openly declared. I was also fearful that she might regard me as a spy for management and that this would threaten our truce. This might appear cowardly but, having observed her impact on others, I preferred to retain my mental and physical health.

In 1985, I interviewed the new Head of the Unit, who had succeeded Maggie Major, to gain her perceptions of the history of the Unit, its relation to the college and future role. Within the college, I informally interviewed the two welfare assistants, caretakers, lecturers, students with disabilities and other

students. What I found difficult, with people with whom I was closely involved, was being to close to the subject. I was inclined to accept answers at face value without investigating further as I might with strangers. I lacked the perseverence of an experienced interviewer, for

> ..It's always taking it that stage further that a professional interviewer knows how to do..
> (Powney and Watts, 1987, p.74)

Resolving Problems

One of the greatest problems I encountered was that of amassing more data than I could use and knowing what to select and reject. This became even more complex when compounded with the problem of a constantly altering process which was continually needing to be reassessed, so that what was relevant data at one stage became redundant at a later stage.

> ..With each new hunch the data collected could be reviewed, but also new observations could be made, and participants in the field could be confronted in the search for their interpretations..
> (Gordon, 1985, p.517)

Consequently, I gathered data in a specific area like curriculum development and changing staff attitudes, only to realise later that an emphasis on college policy might have been more significant. As a lone researcher/teacher I was limited to those areas in which I was directly involved, to gain anything other than a superficial impression. At the writing-up stage I knew that there was valuable data I had not uncovered and much material which was peripheral to the focus of the study.

Through the period of three years as participant-observer I learnt to resolve the dilemma of selecting data and adapting to changing interactions by understanding that I could no longer pretend a distancing from the material which could fairly be described as detached . It was I who selected what I had observed, perceived and understood by events, discussions and

developments. Initially, in the early months of research, I had sought to maintain what I regarded as a suitably objective approach by drawing from documents, minutes of meetings, written comments and recorded evidence of the stages in integration. In my early drafts, I placed the events strictly in sequence, considering that this presented an appropriately historical, chronological format. However, I realised that the constantly changing nature of the drama rendered it an improvisation without a formal text. Consequently, my attempts to neatly gather documentary evidence and present a chronological perspective were an inaccurate reflection of the developments I was hoping to record. I came to understand that, in its selection of data, key personel and perception of events, this had to be MY story and any attempt at objectivity was dishonest and an obstacle to clarity.

Had the same college, scheme and developments been described by the Vice Principal, Unit Head, a student from the special school in the pilot year, 1981-2, or a mature student from a day centre in 1983-4, EACH story would have been quite different. Had my predecessor written of her period from September 1981 to July 1982, or my successor, from her perspective since April 1986, their stories would have been different altogether. They came into completely different circumstances. The chemistry of the situation varied in relation to protagonists, novelty and sub-cultural impetus. I was fortunate, in retrospect, in arriving on the scene when the drama had reached a tragic climax and any improvement was heralded as a progression. This gave me a positive image which, in turn, led to fruitful interaction.

One of my problems was that I was examining disability as an issue, in relation to equal opportunities and minority power status. In my position as liaison lecturer, I was an advocate

for the students with disabilities and I, as their confidant and adviser, gained understanding of the position they were in. To a degree, as Orwell (1935) had gained knowledge of vagrants in Down and Out in Paris and London , I wanted to gain experience of what it was like to be disabled. Yet, unless I became disabled, I could only perceive it second-hand. Most importantly, I was able to get away from the setting in which I assumed minority status, while my students were saddled with their disabilities. Although I learnt much which made me angry and conscious of injustice, I ultimately felt as much of a fraud as I fear Orwell was, for despite the strength of his novel, he never became a vagrant but knew this was a role he could readily exchange.

Something which became apparent in the drama was the inflexibility of the wheelchair-bound roles. As Goffman noted (1968) in his observations on stigma:

> ..I also learned that the cripple must be careful not to act differently from what people expect him to do. Above all they expect the cripple to be crippled; to be disabled and helpless; to be inferior to themselves, and they will become suspicious and insecure if the cripple falls short of these expectations. It is rather strange, but the cripple has to play the part of the cripple..
> (Goffman, 1968, p.135)

One wheelchair-bound individual who would not play the part of the cripple was Molly Francis , the lecturer who had become disabled as a result of an accident while being employed as a member of college staff. She retained her previous identity and expected to be accepted on equal terms and offered equivalent opportunities, as she considered her professional status remained intact. The hostility, deceit and hypocrisy which she endured from both L.E.A. and college officials was her punishment for acting differently from what was expected. She learnt that disabled players were severely restricted in their parts and

their share of the action. They were expected to conform to stereotypes, whilst other players were allowed to improvise by nature of their agility.

Reflections

It took time before I stopped imposing a pattern on the work and gained the confidence to learn, as Will Swann (1987) learnt in his case study research that,

> ..if you look upon the study of the contradictions you come across in the course of your projects as a way of understanding what is going on, as a method or approach to your research, then you may find that you have a valuable additional source of information..
> (Swann, 1987, p.78, from Potts, Sect.4)

Through deciding to abandon a strictly sequential order and discuss issues which revealed complexities and contradictions in the study, I realised that the problems themselves were an integral part of the research and that I had to acknowledge that I was uncovering new issues all the time. There were no neat answers as the problems themselves kept changing shape but I found myself becoming more and more absorbed by the material which emerged.

The great value of resolving these complex problems by applying a continuously probing and reflective approach was that I never became bored with the material as I was constantly re-making the intricate jigsaw to a different pattern. The dilemma was that there could never be a finished version. Will Swann conceded that,

> ..my final version represented the point I had reached in the process, but despite its apparent completeness, I can already see how it could be improved..
> (Swann, 1987, p.157, from Potts, Sect.7)

I altered the format of my research several times during the process of writing it. The version I would write now would certainly include much data which was discarded and omit material

which I had originally considered important. My role as author and protagonist would be more assured within such a version. The process of writing a case study is uncomfortable by its very nature in that it scrapes away at a surface which might reveal layers of detail which turn the whole hypothesis on its head. As with any exploration, it requires an open-ended and receptive approach and a delicacy of touch.

If I were starting now I would concentrate on telling the story of what I experienced, as an individual entering a new situation, and tell it as honestly and clearly as possible. Rather than impose the artificial structure of offering a different topic within each chapter, I would trust to the diary format and relate events, discussions, feelings and reflections in the natural mixture in which they occur. I now realise that, in telling my story as I perceived it, I could also offer an insight into the experience which the students shared. I would use more interviews with informants, including students, secretaries and technical staff, for there were many aspects within the daily life of the college which negated an equal opportunities policy. I would try to present a broader picture of integration , in its widest sense, by examining the college community as a whole instead of restricting myself to the students with disabilities. It is the process of writing a case study, in itself, which has taught me how to approach writing a case study.

SECTION I.

ISSUES IN INTEGRATION.

Chapter One

BARRIERS TO INTEGRATION

In this chapter I examine the concept of special as a labelling process and a barrier to integration. I illustrate the complexities associated with attempts to implement change and discuss the impact of discrimination against minority groups. This discrimination is seen to lead to the abuse of categorisation and the need for a system of positive discrimination to counteract unequal opportunities is discussed. Finally, I examine the perpetuation of poor practice and inconsistency through lack of clear policy guide-lines.

Through the process of recording the case study, I learnt that integration is a complex, challenging experience which necessitates changes in attitude, method and curriculum content. My experiences were that these changes could not develop without a sustained period of confrontation and conflict, as they required a new perspective on educational ideology. The notion of transferring a child from a special to an ordinary school implies that there might be some standard form of normal school . Instead, I suggest that there are as many different ordinary schools as special schools . This is borne out in research which records the development of integration schemes, where the careful selection of ordinary school is crucial to the success of the scheme (Hegarty & Pocklington, 1982; Booth and Potts, 1983; Gurney, 1985; Fish, 1985). At Malborough Comprehensive, in Oxfordshire, for example, all senior staff are promoted internally which maintains a cohesive ethos. The Head, Gerry O'Hagan, works to positively support children with special educational needs by disregarding junior school records and by offering a broad curriculum, which includes the choice of many varied creative activities every afternoon. Had he not created

such an exceptional ordinary school in Malborough Comprehensive, it is unlikely that he would have met with such remarkable success in providing for children with special educational needs. (O'Hagan, 1985). Whilst Warnock referred throughout to the ordinary school , Fish rejects such a concept, referring instead to primary , secondary and special schools. The Fish Report implies that each mainstream school will differ in direct relation to the special needs of its pupils. Of particular importance, in terms of fundamental barriers to integration, is the notion that the school itself can create special needs by offering inadequate pastoral support and classroom organisation, by displaying rigidity in curriculum planning and by generally conveying a dispirited ethos (Fish, 1985).

Research into curriculum change within Secondary Schools confirms this suggestion that schools determine the level of special educational need within their pupil population, and further implies that the rate at which curriculum will be modified to suit special needs will differ according to the ethos among staff (Davie, Phillips & Callely, 1985). In the light of this evidence, the ordinary school is revealed as a myth. There are successful and unsuccessful primary and secondary schools just as there are poor and excellent Special schools. The whole issue of failed integration schemes needs to be viewed in this context. Integration into a primary or secondary school, which is already ill-serving its existing population, is likely to fail (Harries, 1985). Integration into a schools like Malborough, which has responded to curriculum change and is sensitive to its pupils with special needs, is more likely to meet with success. Thus has developed a pattern of careful pre-selection of ordinary schools. However, there are both ethical and logical weaknesses in implementing a policy which is

dependent upon certain, exceptional ordinary schools rather than legislating for uniformity of provision.

The Concept of Special

What exceptional mainstream schools can surely teach us is to perceive special need in terms of requirement and not label. Just as a transition from special to ordinary placement implies that there is some definitive ordinariness , so it suggests that there must be something special about any form of disability. Bogdan and Kugelmass (1984) refer to an incident which stands the stereotype of special need on its head and redefines the narrow concept of disability . When they began to investigate mainstreaming by visiting schools,

> ..a clear concept of disability, mainstreaming and special education turned more and more into a mirage. For example, on an early visit to one of the high schools in our study, a girl in a wheelchair rode by us, coming the opposite way, as we walked down the hall with the school's principal. When the word disabled was used by one of us in talking about this girl, we were told by our guide that this teenager was not disabled. When questioned, the principal explained how, officially, students are designated as disabled only if they required special services, were reviewed by the Committee on the Handicapped and had an Individualised Educational Programme (IEP). The young lady lived close to the school and did not need special transportation. She fully participated in the regular high school activities without special arrangements. Therefore, she was not perceived as a mainstreamed student because, in fact, administratively, she was not disabled.
> (Bogdan & Kugelmass, 1984, p.174)

This example clearly illustrates that special need is largely an administrative concept which will vary in direct relation to available resources. Unfortunately, this term is habitually applied when a borough or institution is unwilling or unable to accommodate changes to suit an individual's needs. This reassessment of the notion of disability points to the rationale of a consumer-orientated approach, in which individuals, or their advocates, will clarify the services they require. The onus will then be on the educational

establishments, as public service provision, to respond to consumer needs. This must become an integral part of educational provision and not, as at present, a special concession. When I discussed the concept of special need with Robert Bogdan in October 1986, at Syracuse University, he maintained that,

> ..those words mainstreaming and integration are indicators that we are not integrating, we're not mainstreaming. The goal should be for no one to know what those words mean - for them to be strange.
> (Bogdan, interviewed 1986)

An examination of earlier experiences in which integration equates with assimilation , in relation to immigrant children, should surely alert us to the dangers of following the same path. Immigrant children were carefully dispersed in order that the majority culture was maintained. However, this process of assimilation provides a barrier to the changes which can ultimately lead to a community in which the integrated minority are positive participants. In the assimilation model there is always a dominant culture into which the incoming minority are expected to adapt. The majority culture inevitably absorbs the minority, if assimilation is seen to have succeeded. Clearly, if the minority group wish to assimilate satisfactorily, they will have to sacrifice identity in order to comply. Ladd regards this as too great a loss, and an illustration of the arrogance of majority cultures,

> ..forceful, clumsy attempts to mainstream not only deny the facts about being deaf but destroy much that deaf people and their friends have worked so hard to create and may, in the last resort, be seen as genocidal..
> (Ladd, 1981, p.405)

Ladd's justifiable anger reinforces my unease with the term mainstreaming which I expressed in my introduction. The term embodies the implication that to conform to a stated norm is the only viable form of integration. It ignores another perception: that integration means tolerance of differences and

flexibility of approach.

The development of multi-cultural education can be regarded as an alternative approach to minority groups. However, whilst it challenged the notion of easy assimilation, this approach was criticised for watering-down the curriculum (Stone, 1981). Where an alternative provision is devised, there is immediately the threat of stratifying educational diet and further segregating categories of need. In comprehensive schools, when an alternative curriculum is provided for the non-examination group, the pupils concerned and their peers often regard this as of less value than the mainstream curriculum. From broad remedial programmes have developed highly structured individual behaviour modification programmes, designed to shape learning and behaviour. Will Swann saw that,

> ..an almost inevitable consequence of behavioural objectives programmes in the mainstream is that they concentrate on basic skills. Not only is the child segregated from his peers by the way he is taught, he is also given a reduced curriculum..
> (Swann, 1983, p.120).

If we are to avoid the negative effects of assimilation by ensuring the complete inclusion of the minority within the host institution, a policy which responds to the needs of all participants is to be sought. Booth (1983) recognised the lengthy and painfully slow process of integration, within which complexities were inevitable, so that we should resist the assumption that solutions like assimilation or multi-cultural education can produce an integrated educational community.

Implementing Change

Even when change is to their advantage, people often resist its impetus. Staff at junior training centres, for example, displayed passive resistance and anxiety when they were brought under the DES in 1971, despite the enhanced status this created

(Franks, 1976). They had grown used to a degree of autonomy under Social Services and resented the intrusion of teaching methods and educational structures. A theme to be reiterated throughout this study is that change can be threatening, and imply a loss of confidence in what was already established. Tony Booth (1983) recorded the defensive response of teachers who felt that integration schemes were denegrating the quality of provision in the special schools. Many staff feel uneasy if they are asked to work alongside other colleagues, especially if a teacher introduces new methods. If attitudes and methods are to be changed, the process will take time and cannot be rushed - staff have to reach the stage of wanting to change methods because they believe them to be right, not because they have been directed to do so. Yet, paradoxically, without firm direction, policies which are introduced to support and strengthen minority interests will remain ineffective for the powerless status of minorities prevents change. Change has to be instigated from a position of authority. In Chapter 8, a college principal is described as an innovator for students with special needs. He forced change in attitudes from his staff, using his authority to implement what he saw to be right.

Discrimination belongs to the powerful, placed in a position to make judgements, and must therefore be employed with the greatest regard for justice and equality. However, this is not the case in practice. Teacher prejudice has been observed to disregard evident ability in favour of damaging stereotypes (Wright, 1985). Wright found that West Indian pupils had been excluded from the O level band, despite having higher marks than many white and Asian pupils who were included, on the tenuous grounds that they were simply not suitable . Some teachers have been recorded as placing ethnic minorities in order of preference

(The Swann Report, 1985). Black youths have been over-represented in the less favoured Mode B Youth Training Schemes (Mackney, 1985). Such evident discrimination might be regarded, perhaps, as gross ignorance on behalf of the perpetrators. Surely there is no such excuse for discrimination within special education. Yet, ironically, where one might anticipate professional understanding and tolerance, there are examples of degrees of discrimination which go beyond those found in mainstream education.

Recent research revealed that a head of a school for children with moderate learning difficulties was opposed to integrating children with Down's Syndrome because it would give parents a bad impression. Staff at another similar school kept their children with Down's Syndrome out of sight when prospective parents were being shown round. One girl with Down's Syndrome was refused help from a peripatetic support teacher as she was regarded as in need of special education and not within the scope of that particular service. Another girl with Down's Syndrome was made to sit on her own in class in the mainstream school, and other children placed next to her as a punishment if they misbehaved. Researchers had more difficulty in obtaining their sample of children with Down's Syndrome in special schools for children with moderate learning difficulties than in mainstream schools where there was less anxiety about labelling (Watkins, 1986). I was not surprised by these findings as they reflected my experiences as head of special care in the special school. The closer the practitioners feel to the lower rung in the hierarchy, the more threatening they appear to regard it. It surely indicates the negative force of a system which preserves labelling, in all its guises and levels of hypocrisy.

It might be assumed that in adult training centres, more

recently termed Social Education Centres, no discrimination would operate, as all provision was designed to cater for the needs of people with learning difficulties. However, Dean and Hegarty (1984) found that four separate categories of handicap were recognised in one centre. They ranged in order of severity from slow learner to ESN (M) to ESN (S) and, finally to high dependency . Another centre used the terms mentally handicapped , high dependency and special care . From my experience as a protagonist in a situation where I was part of the bottom of the hierarchy, the special care in a school for children with learning difficulties, I am all too aware of the dangers of such categorisation as it invariably leads to discrimination in treatment, attitudes and the sharing of resources. The most dependent are placed in the least favoured position.

Abusing Labels

Since the publication of the Warnock Report (1978) and the legislation of the 1981 Act, the whole concept of labelling special needs has fallen out of favour. We must ensure, however, that the legislative framework of the 1981 Act does not promote an increased volume of categorisation, purely to fuel the funds. The ambiguity of discriminating categories of need is reflected in the current abuse of the special education system in the United States. Whilst a high proportion of Black, Hispanic and Puerto Rican children are labelled mildly mentally retarded , White children are over-represented in the learning disabled category, which has grown 125% from 1976 to 1982 (Howe and Wright Edelman, 1985). This reflects two anomalies: every label, which denotes another child who requires special treatment , will produce more resources from the authorities and thus benefit the majority; some labels are far more acceptable than others.

Witness the rapid expansion of the dyslexia label in Britain and the growth of children labelled learning disabled in America. Within this context, we need to guard against using labels, which purport to prescribe educational requirements, and merely employ the system to reject the disaffected. As long ago as 1975, Budoff percieved that,

> ..the euphemism of a special class was actually operated as a dumping ground for problem children, especially those exhibiting behaviour problems. The child, by assignment to the dummy class, became captive of a host of negative stereotypes and prejudices that were expressed openly and often by his peers and the school staff with consequent harm accruing to the child. (Budoff, 1975, p.5)

When placed in charge of a unit for disaffected pupils, which was attached to the host-school, Wilman (1982) found that, once children had been excluded, although they were still on the same site staff rarely visited them and generally refused to attempt reintegration. She perceived that the pupils were fully aware of their rejected status and often began to truant.

Positive Discrimination

Policy is of paramount importance in implementing a system which works against discrimination to create changes which will produce a more equitable society. The Gifford Report (1986) calls for a more balanced professional representation in prescribing a policy to train Black teachers to work in multi-racial city areas and so offer Black children models of authority figures. Discrimination against the employment of teachers with disabilities indicates a gross hypocrisy towards any policy which purports to offer equality of opportunity (Kettle, 1986). The tenacity and courage required to sustain a course to enter the teaching profession with a pronounced disability acts as a discriminatory barrier (Lones, 1985). There are notable examples of teachers who have successfully completed their training, only

to be rejected because they are in wheelchairs (Educare, 1981; Lones, 1985; Kettle, 1986). Within my own experience, I have spoken with one young man who graduated with a good degree in History and applied to do a P.G.C.E. He explained at interview that his condition of Friedreich's Ataxia was progressive and that he would certainly remain confined to a wheelchair. He was, nonetheless, allowed to complete his course before being informed that he was considered unsuitable.

> I gained distinction for teaching practice and battled in to school in the snow, when many of my fellow students had given up. I was quite determined to prove that I could cope and would be reliable as an employee. (Prospective teacher with disabilities, 1985)

After writing for 400 jobs in teaching, he admitted defeat. Unless there is clear anti-discrimination policy which is seen to operate fairly, such cases will continue to illustrate that simply being in a wheelchair is regarded as an inability to cope effectively.

Lack of coherent national and LEA policy has created absurd and iniquitous anomalies. In Derbyshire, for example, children with severe learning difficulties are integrated into mainstream schools in one part of the county but sent to special schools in the other part. Bromley was able to establish a pattern of integration into infant schools as a result of parental pressure, but, because a new special school was being built alongside the moves towards integration, and because developments were no reflection of policy, the places in the new school had to be filled and the scheme, although successful, could not extend beyond the infant school stage (Booth, 1983). Lack of policy wastes resources, dissipates energy and creates unwelcome confusion. In the case of a unit attached to an infant school, for example, the arrangement reflected administrative convenience - the remainder of the special school had been transferred to a

distant location, considered too far for the youngest children - but not coherent policy. The headteacher was frustrated by having no one person in the education office who would then accept responsibility for the smooth-running of the scheme (ACE, 1979). Hegarty and Pocklington (1982) noted that this administrative apathy was responsible for many problems in similar schemes.

Perpetuating Inconsistency

It might have been assumed that LEAs would have learnt from this research, yet, in 1986 these clumsy errors are still recurring. A clear example of lack of LEA policy is illustrated in the case of a primary school teacher discovering that she would be teaching a girl with physical disabilities, through a phone call from the headteacher in the preceeding holidays. No welfare assistant had been allocated and the teacher was expected to interview for one herself, with no previous experience of requirements. It was sheer good fortune that she selected a suitable assistant who then had to cope with inadequate resources because the equipment which had been promised by the LEA failed to materialise. Physiotherapy services only lasted for a term and then ended on the job falling vacant, as the LEA decided they could no longer afford this service. The educational implications of the disability had not been explained to the class teacher, and she had to learn, at some cost to herself and the class, by a system of trial and error (Taylor, 1986). This example is characteristic of the reliance upon individual goodwill rather that national and LEA policy and it has marred the progress of integration for too long. Unfortunately, when assessing regional response to the implementation of the 1981 Act, Rogers (1986) implied that the level of cohesion required to effectively implement policy remains illusory.

It would be unrealistic to expect policy alone to improve the condition of the socially oppressed. The current trend towards integration is no reflection of a policy which seeks to create equal opportunities but rather one which works within the system. This is epitomised in the increase of integration for children with physical or sensory disabilities developing alongside the expansion in separate provision for children with behavioural problems (Swann, 1985). Low expectations can become accurate predictions (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968) unless the teacher prejudice detailed by Wright (1985) and Tomlinson (1984) can be changed from within. Howe and Wright Edelman warn that,

> unless higher academic standards in public classrooms are accompanied by additional resources directed towards strengthening the mainstream, an increasing number of children will be placed in double jeopardy by being assigned handicapped status in addition to their minority status. Our schools have too often used the hard-won and sorely needed system of special education as a resegregating mechanism to exclude poor and minority children from the regular classroom.
> (Howe and Wright Edelman, 1985, p.31)

Until the priority of any policy for integration becomes one of strengthening the mainstream, teachers will continue to feel exploited yet again. They are increasingly expected to cope with more stressful working conditions - larger classes, fewer resources and lowered morale - so that the inclusion of additional children, whose special educational needs require extra attention, preparation and modification of teaching method, is likely to meet with resistance rather than enthusiasm.

Chapter Two

A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

In this chapter I examine those developments which have led to increased independence for people with disabilities, including the expansion of community rather that institutional residential provision. The level of support required to sustain this degree of independence is assessed and the power of legislation to facilitate independent living is evaluated.

Enhanced opportunities for integration and social independence can prove to be intimidating as,

> ..choice is as much about being wrong as it is about being right, but learning that is never fun, and learning that lesson years after your able-bodied contemporaries could be traumatic..
> (Bee, 1985, p.9).

Assuming a more independent status can reveal limitations as banning discrimination is no guarantee of ensuring successful integration. Discovering limitations which the legislation of anti-discrimination cannot counteract demands maturity and requires support in the community (Walker, 1982; Newton, 1984; Glad, 1984; Bee, 1985).

Supporting Independence

The process of integration requires sustained psychological support, yet when the topic of integration is raised, it is invariably in connection with technical aids and physical adaptations - rarely with the need for psychologically support (Brattgard, 1976). Even in relation to young people whose primary problems appear to be those of mobility and access, psychological support is vital (Anderson, 1982). Integration into the community requires planning and skilled and competent staffing. (Brown, 1985). The process of deinstitutionalisation in the USA has indicated that placement in the community is insufficient for integration: support and sustained care is

essential. On a recent visit to that most integrated of cities, New York, I observed the casualties of an enlightened process which throws people into an urban pit, to live on their wits. Former inmates of segregated institutions had been integrated into the vagrant communities of street-life: the seaside boarding house existence of many former hospital inmates in Britain remains similarly within the periphery of society. Such lack of long-term community support denies integration into anything other than a sub-strata of society. This social dilemma has been recognised by the nursing profession as being a problem of the current approach to community integration (Sines, 1984). Whilst I would agree with Brown that skilled staff and structured technology are important components of integration in the community, I consider that psychological support is a complex issue when that social integration is into a less than caring society (Burdon, Kawalek, Welch, 1986).

A move to independence can be facilitated through skilled intervention in which social skills are developed through intensive training. Some usual stages of maturity are denied to many young people with special educational needs, and have to be taught in a structured programme, in order to offer an opportunity to integrate socially (Hutchinson, 1983; Whelan, Speake and Strickland, 1984; Biklen, 1985). For certain individuals with severe physical disabilities, micro-technology has offered a wonderful opportunity to gain new autonomy as, for example, in using a speech synthesiser in order to communicate (Hawkridge, Vincent & Hales, 1985). Yet this remarkable degree of success cannot be generalised for, as with anti-discrimination, intervention can neither solve all difficulties nor overcome specific problems. Micro-technology, in particular, was initially hailed as the solution to the communication and

educational problems of people with physical disabilities. This attitude can only lead to disappointment and frustration for some individuals as Hawkridge, Vincent and Hales (1985) illustrate, in their example of a boy with cerebral palsy who was given a computer which could produce complex data only if he could spell accurately and recognise the alphabet. Unfortunately his limited skill precluded his gaining full benefit from the technology, which, it must be emphasised, can only be as useful as the user is able to make it.

Community Living

The move towards increased independence has brought people with disabilities into community housing. Topliss (1982) recognises that the special role of carer, which close relatives gradually acquire along with sensitivity towards their loved one's emotional needs, is difficult for staff in residential units to operate, in relation to the different needs of their members. The carer might be a facilitator or trainer depending upon needs (Hall & Kent, 1985). The complexities of community living are recognised in the growth of half-way houses where support is maintained (Morton, 1984; GLAD, 1984; Holmes, 1984; STV, 1985; Vousden, 1985), and in the development of sheltered housing schemes (Shearer, 1982). Day centres have changed their approach in recent years and are moving into the community, where they are offering an increased realism about future goals. Both Keith Grove, in Hammersmith, and The Stone House, in Corby, move away from traditional sheltered workshop care towards training in self-help and independence, recognising that there is little possibility of most of their members obtaining employment (GLAD, 1984; Grover & Gladstone, 1981). The new philosophy requires buildings which reflect their changed function (Symons, 1981). The workshop structure has to be

replaced by a domestic environment which offers a degree of privacy and flexibility. However, this move away from sub-contract work towards increased community involvement has been resisted by some members, who feel threatened, having enjoyed the security of sheltered work. There is a need to recognise that, despite the liberating impact of this move to independence, social integration can be uncomfortable and lonely. It is part of a process which forces previously dependent people to assume adult status, which was often denied them. Where this movement is flawed is that it involves placing people into a society which is assumed to offer normalisation . Just as the normal school is a myth, so normal society is an amorphous concept, leaving opportunities for all that is unjust, intimidating and cruel. Rather than teach the handicapped to adapt to society we must produce a legislative framework which provides equality of opportunity - in access, employment, housing and educational provision. A reliance upon goodwill alone prolongs a paternalistic dependency. (Markham, 1983)

The Power of Legislation

Legislation, to ensure that people with disabilities are accorded that degree of social and political participation which the majority claim as of right, is the only lever to change. I observed the impact of legislation in the United States, where mainstream teachers were accommodating children with a wide range of special needs. These were not special teachers, nor were they saints. They were not co-operating through pure goodwill. They were contracted to provide for these children, under Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children's Act , and goodwill did not enter into it, although Biklen (1985) recognises that the success of integration rests upon the enthusiastic mainstream teachers and not in forcing teachers

against their wishes. What legislation does provide, however, is a framework in which to progress, as it is dealing with rights , and is demanding change to fulfil those rights. Where the British legislation, in the form of the 1981 Education Act, is weak in comparison, is that it merely recommends, rather than directs (Fish, 1985). It offers such flexibility that LEAs can offer widely contrasting provision, or make minimal changes. The value of legislation, as Booth (1983) emphasises, is its ability to enhance opportunities for the powerless minority, while forcing compliance upon the powerful authorities. It can be a liberating agent for change, as in past examples of civil rights for racial minorities and for women. Developments can progress in isolation from each other, as has been the case to date with the growth of integration but, in order to produce centralised cohesion, no power will match that of clearly defined legislation. Without such direction, policy for integration will continue to be ignored or abused, as the educational and social system in Britain is one which resist change and preserves a hierarchy of privilege. A climate for change, like the British weather itself, cannot be relied upon.

Chapter Three

FITTING IN

The conventional placement model of integration is assessed in this chapter. Placement is a term used to indicate the transfer of a child from one educational location to another. The emphasis is upon the physical, emotional and intellectual fitting-into-place. The child has to be able to cope with the expectations of the placement, which is a fixed structure not designed to accommodate individual needs. The divisive effect of such a model, which selects and rejects, alienates staff and fosters professional jealousy, is illustrated. The impact of locational integration and the influence of support teachers on mainstream curriculum is discussed in relation to a wider form of integration in the community. The problems of individual integration schemes, in which isolation and emotional stress can damage academic process, are evaluated.

It is the Warnock Report (1978) which imposed a definition of integration involving placement and which alternative concepts, in the 1981 Act and the Fish Report (1985), have been unable to eradicate. In the description of integration offered in the Warnock Report degrees of integration are reflected in the degrees of placement they allow (Warnock, 1978, 7.7-7.9). Where placement is peripheral, as in a unit or attached to a mainstream school, this is termed locational . Where it involves integration into recreational activities, it is termed social . In that degree of placement which involves full participation in the curriculum and communal life of the school, functional integration has been achieved.

Partial Participation

One of the problems in defining degrees of practice is that those who operate within such practices will regard anything

other than the fullest form as being unsatisfactory, as Jones (1983) here indicates,

> ..this (locational integration) has been referred to as the limpet model of integration whereby children are attached as a group to a school, like a limpet to a ship, in the hope that some waves of normality will wash over them..
> (Jones, 1983, p.36)

This low opinion of the value of locational integration is substantiated by recent visitors to the USA, who observed that the integration for up to 25% of the school-day of pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties, took place exclusively in recreational periods, which recent research had suggested was not as useful as in formal lesson, such that

> ..we must consider reversing these practices so that mainstreaming starts in the relatively controlled setting of the classroom and progresses towards the more demanding freer sessions..the process has to be an active one involving changes within the school and the classroom. One such change is the switch towards cooperation between pupils and away from an individualistic and competitive milieu.
> (Stobart & Trickey, 1985, p.4).

These critical comments illustrate the inadequate level of participation which this model permits, yet, in observing such locational mainstreaming in the USA in November 1986, I considered being on the same site was at least a positive progression from totally separate special educational provision. It is a crude implication, however, to suggest that children with special needs will automatically benefit from informal association with normal children. Some examples of social contact could be positively detrimental and even when this interaction is advantageous, it is difficult to measure its effect upon a child who may not learn most fruitfully within an unstructured setting. Where is the opportunity for progression in a position where participation can only remain receptive, but never active? My observations of the social impact of

mainstreaming on autistic adolescents in a high school in Syracuse were that even purely receptive participation brought the benefit of role modelling which modified bizarre behaviour.

Easing the Process

The curriculum must serve the needs of all children for integration to develop towards a fruitful level of participation. Those children who have been relegated to locational and social integration in the past, have been declared unsuitable for participation within a mainstream curriculum. This has been because the curriculum was designed to suit a normality as nebulous as that which locational integration entailed. This curriculum had excluded up to 18% of pupils in mainstream provision, deemed by Warnock to have special educational needs. In order to make a full contribution to the activity of the school (Warnock 7.9), all children need to experience a curriculum in which they are all active participants. The level of participation available within a scheme will dictate its successful development. I will consider the quality of this participation by assessing what the integrated group need, how other participants benefit and the role played by the community.

Practitioners in integration schemes agree that, above all else, children with special educational needs require good teachers. (Burrows, 1983; Garnett, 1983; Smith, 1985). This assertion might appear simplistic but it is fundamental to successful integration, both from inside and outside mainstream provision. Just as adaptable, experienced teachers benefit mainstream pupils, including the less-able, so they benefit children with special needs. Skilled teaching is more important than specialist status (Burrows, 1983; Garnett, 1983). Brennan (1982) established that such a resource was essential, whilst comprehensive education continued to neglect many of its

mainstream slow-learners . If teachers are to assume responsibility for this area, they need to value its importance within curriculum development. This communal commitment can be established if staff responsible for special needs carry senior management status, an appropriate share of teacher-time and resources is committed to the area, the specialist has teaching and administrative commitments other than those relating to special need and all teachers assume responsibility for those children in their care who have special educational needs.

Sharing Resources

Where locational integration exists, and a specialist unit is established, it should become common-ground for all members of the school community. Thus, a carpeted, comfortably furnished unit for children with hearing-impairment contributed

> ..to the fact that teachers and many pupils with normal hearing were more than willing to find an excuse (or seek an invitation) to go into the Unit at breaks and lunchtimes, so assisting the overall aim of social integration..
> (Eyre & Hall, 1983, p.43)

Where a Base Room in the host school is to be provided, it needs to be attractive and welcoming, and not in the sorry condition which staff at Bishopswood Special School found at Chiltern Edge Comprehensive School,

> ..The room's decor was in a very bad state of repair, there were holes in some of the walls, and most of the paint had been pulled off the walls... On some days the children needed to return to Bishopswood, because we could not use the classroom. This was unsettling for both staff and pupils, adding additional stress to the beginning of this new venture..
> (CSIE, 1985, p.7)

A scheme which withdraws children for some practical lessons into their special school in adjacent grounds to the mainstream school could incorporate those children from the comprehensive who might benefit from small groups and intensive tuition as in Joseph Clark School for visually impaired children (Smith, 1985).

Integration can then become a co-operative, two-way process, the special school offering its facilities to the mainstream. The relationship between the two institutions might then become more balanced, special schools no longer beholden. In the link between Bishopswood School and Sonning Common Primary School, the usual imbalance of this relationship is reflected, the mainstream school setting the tone:

> ..We are aware of the need to respect the aims and values of the primary school, particularly standards of behaviour and try to ensure that our children conform as far as they possibly can..Initially the staff felt they were under permanent stress of the children being well behaved in front of the main school community.. (CSIE, 1985 p.6 & 8)

This imbalance implies that the mainstream school ethos will remain unchallenged.

Strengthening the Mainstream

Yet modification of curriculum will benefit both the statemented incomers and those labelled remedial within the mainstream system. These groups are often separately taught and staffed, although working within a mainstream syllabus (Garnett, 1983). Stobart and Trickey (1985) discovered that IEPs alone are no guarantee of a modified curriculum , but an acknowledgement that curriculum content must be monitored and adapted, and teaching method must relate to individual differences, can only benefit those children whose needs are still unmet within the existing provision (Hodgson, 1985). The benefits to the majority group of the inclusion within the class of a child with special educational needs have been recorded as being the learning of consideration, tolerance and caring and learning to take responsibility for, and to relate to, those different from themselves (Goodison, 1983; Taylor, 1986). These observations were within primary settings, where one might expect greater tolerance, yet I was very impressed with the level of caring and

shared responsibility offered to autistic adolescents in the buddy-scheme of Nottingham High School, Syracuse. In the adolescent culture of 1986, it seemed to me to be of great value to include compassion and sharing with dependent peers as an integral element of the curriculum.

Support teachers can work from within the mainstream school, sharing their specialist skills with other staff (Jones, 1983). Such a system has gained notable success in Heltwate School and Whitefield School, both special schools which support local primary schools, helping to retain children in mainstream who might earlier have been selected for segregated education (Gurney, 1985; Whitefield, 1986). As well as offering curriculum guidance, the role of the support teacher is to enable the mainstream teacher to cope with the child with special needs. The support teacher will sometimes work with the rest of the class while the class teacher works individually with the child who has learning difficulties. This process should aid the de-mystification of the specialist , and lead towards an educational community which shares, rather than abdicates, its responsibilities.

Community Participation

Just as integration cannot be left to schools, any more than schools can compensate for social ills, so the political and social implications of integration have far-reaching effects beyond the confines of educational institutions (Bookis, 1983; Barton & Tomlinson, 1984; Fraser, 1984). The social lives of children with special educational needs cannot be separated from their learning problems: Davidson suggested a correlation between reading difficulties and the tendency to be drawn into urban riot (1985). The association between areas of high unemployment and urban poverty and a higher than average proportion of children

selected for inclusion in schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties has been well-established (Mongon, 1983; Tomlinson, 1984). Participation in educational development within the community can facilitate integration in two major areas.

The first is in taking educational provision into the community. Adult education has developed increasingly innovative networks of community provision: where people with severe learning difficulties work alongside their able-bodied peers; where severely disabled people are brought into classes or taught in the community; where the long-term unemployed are encouraged to regard further education as their right, and asked to control the form in which learning will take place (Fordham, Poulton, Randle, 1979; Adult Literacy, 1982; Billis, 1984). Community responsibility towards the plight of the young unemployed is recognised as crucial, if they are to preserve a feeling of worth (Coffield, Borrill & Marshall, 1983). Educational opportunities have to be brought out to those who have rejected the institutional model.

The second is by bringing the community into the educational institution. The most effective example of this provision is offered in those rare community schools which have been established in recent years. Sutton Centre, in North Nottinghamshire, encourages attendance from people of all ages and interests, where teaching can be based upon individual needs (Booth, 1983). This educational establishment effectively belongs to its members, the local community. There is then no question of curriculum not being relevant, as the members dictate the subjects on offer. Integration, of age-groups, abilities, special needs, and curriculum opportunities, can occur spontaneously within a centre in which the corporate level of

participation is so cohesive.

In Charnwood Nursery Centre, in Stockport, Cheshire, fifty children with a range of disabilities are integrated among a total of a hundred and seventy pre-school children. The impact extends beyond a benefit to the children,

> ..A scheme like ours has a good influence on home life, integrating parents as well as children..At Charnwood parents don't feel rejected or isolated, and the positive effect on the whole family is helpful..
> (Orton, 1986, p.3)

Physical and social participation is far more valuable than, for example, the less tangible guidance and advice from professionals, which usually characterises parent/professional relationships,

> ..I know from experience how important it is for mothers and fathers to feel that they are people of worth. But rather than sitting them down and simply giving advice, Charnwood involves everyone in a practical, helping way so we learn together..
> (teacher from Charnwood, Orton, 1986, p.9)

Integration in the community must involve encouraging parents to be active participants in their children's education. So often there has been an uneasy mistrust between parent and professional, despite their mutual interest in the child with its special needs. This must be changed, if integration is to progress, for,

> ..if equal partnership is really to be developed under the 1981 Act, parents will often need a lot more support, information and skills than professionals have offered them in the past..
> (Shearer, 1983, p.13)

Participation in the community requires that the school recognises its role as an institutional support within a wider social context, where children will bring their special needs from their domestic experience into their school experience.

A school which has acknowledged the influence of domestic and emotional anxiety upon learning is Barking Abbey, in Essex,

where a problem solving group meet regularly in school with a psychologist, pastoral support teacher and counsellor, to help each other to talk through their problems and discuss ways in which they can cope (Kerfoot, Barnett & Giles, 1985). In this way the children are allowed to become active participants in their problem-solving, rather than solely recipients of advice. It is also an effective method of ensuring they take responsibility for their own behaviour. Special education can all too often create passive acceptance and produce dependency. This approach to problems places the onus upon the members of the group, without making decisions on their behalf.

Selection and Rejection

The assimilation into existing curricula, which a traditional model of integration necessitates, imposes specific restrictions. The child must be able to cope with the level of work. There has to be a limit on the number of children with special educational needs who are accepted, as the minority group must remain within a a defined, restricted proportion. An example of both these restrictions in operation is in the integration of pupils with partial hearing into Gartree High School, where integration became complicated by the increased severity of hearing impairment among the new intake, and by the growth in numbers within the scheme (Eyre & Hall, 1983). The degree of handicap dictates a modified curriculum and the imbalanced proportion of integrated minority imposes change. Where children with special educational needs are supported in mainstream by specifically designated welfare staff, support teachers and special unit facilities, such apparent benefits can serve to perpetuate segregation, as a study of social integration in a Language Unit illustrates. Extreme dependence on the support teacher, coupled with social difficulties in the

mainstream group, led to the pupils from the Language Unit tending to cling together, valuing the security of the segregated unit as a base (Hurford & Hart, 1979). The children selected for integration are not the only ones who can experience stress and disadvantage in the process.

The traditional model of integration, placing the individual within the appropriate mainstream context, includes a parallel process of rejecting those children deemed unsuitable. Bishopswood School was involved in this dilemma, as a more profoundly handicapped group remained, whilst the most able were integrated:

> ..we know that we have disadvantaged some of these children. This is particularly the case with one child, a 15 year old with hydrocephalus; this child has useful speech but is now unable to speak with her speaking peers who have moved to Chiltern Edge..
> (CSIE, 1985, p.10)

The process of placing specialist staff into mainstream education and selecting the most able children from special education to be integrated can lead to professional jealousy. It is frustrating for those staff remaining in special schools to relinquish their most able and rewarding pupils to mainstream teachers. Their criticism of mainstream teaching methods in relation to their own expertise, can be understood in this context. The selection of certain members of the special school staff for inclusion in the integration programme can foster tension:

> ..when five out of fifteen staff in a special school are used as support teachers in mainstream, what is the feeling of those who remain behind?..
> (Hancock, 1986)

Professional jealousy is not confined to the process of selection for inclusion in the integration programme, but can develop within a unit model. In a junior school resource area for pupils with visual handicaps, the negative attitude of the specialist teacher was the greatest barrier to integration. In most

respects this was a successful model in a well-organised school with a supportive headteacher and well-prepared staff, parents and pupils. However, the specialist teacher resented interference from non-specialist staff, which, in turn, made them loath to co-operate. Not until he retired was progress made in developing a sharing of resources. He was replaced by two teachers from the host school who had developed interest and expertise in this area (Hegarty & Pocklington, 1981).

Just as I earlier illustrated that barriers to integration were evident within special education, and not exclusively in mainstream provision, so professional jealousy can mar progress from inside the system. When a teacher revealed the intellectual potential of a girl with cerebral palsy and was able to arrange for her transfer from institutional care into mainstream society, her efforts were met with extreme hostility from some specialist staff who felt threatened by the challenge this change of status gave their professional integrity (Crossley & McDonald, 1982). One of the most damaging features of labelling is that it fosters neat categorisations, so that any change can appear to be administratively anarchic.

Problems of Integration

Even where an individual integration programme can be judged successful, the problem of isolation can remain. The Fish Report (1985) records the progress of an academically able boy with severe visual handicap who is integrated into a comprehensive school. Whilst noting the complexities of curriculum diversity, frequent room changes and expensive specialist equipment, the major problem is seen as one of isolation from visually impaired peers. Stephen Bing, Director of the Massachusetts Advocacy Centre, in Boston, confirmed this problem as proving to be a source of anxiety among parents of adolescents in the USA. Those

young people with sensory disabilities who had been integrated individually into high schools were displaying signs of emotional disturbance and depression, unable to relate to others in their peer group. I was interested that Bing's admission of this dilemma, in discussion at the Advocacy Centre in November 1986, so closely accorded with Ladd's (1981) observation of the need to maintain a network of people with similar experiences. If a problem-centred approach to integration includes the recognition of basic complexities within the process itself, then I feel we must answer to the natural needs of adolescent students by offering them role models with whom they can identify. Ideally, this should include teachers, as well as fellow-students, who share their sensory or physical disabilities.

Whilst children with learning difficulties, or complex physical handicaps associated with additional problems, can integrate successfully at infant school level, their problems tend to increase as primary is replaced by secondary curriculum (Cope & Anderson, 1981). The ability to adapt decreases with age. Integration is more likely to succeed, therefore, if a child with special educational needs is introduced to mainstream aged five rather than ten, as illustrated in the example of a boy with mobility problems, from Richard Cloudesley Special School who was integrated into Prior Weston Primary School. Despite his good academic ability, and careful planning from both schools, he asked to return to the special school after less than a year. This boy, at the age of ten, had already become established as one of the most capable children in the special school. As Tingle (1985) was led to ask,

> ..What is the most appropriate age for integration? At a special school an able child quickly becomes a king pin yet entry into the real world at any time is bound to be difficult.. (p.2).

This example illustrates that integration after the age of ten is extremely demanding upon the child who has established a place within the sheltered world of the special school. When this also entails coping with the considerable hurdle of the exam-orientated curriculum which has, until recent initiatives have been implemented, isolated many children already in mainstream education, the problems are compounded. (Fish 1985).

However, an acknowledgement of the need to integrate children at the earliest possible age has been demonstrated in the increase in the number of children with Down's syndrome who are starting in mainstream infant schools rather than special schools. We must approach the early integration of children with Down's Syndrome with some caution if Budgell (1986) is to be heeded, for he found the return of these children into segregated provision, when the problems of secondary curricula rigidity arose, to occur with alarming frequency. In order to liberate the curriculum we need to evaluate infant school methods and adult education methods - the two opposite extremes of the age groups - to learn how to integrate subject areas, curriculum content, and approaches to suit the needs of a wide range of abilities. It is in these two areas that policies of streaming and selection rarely operate, and in which a history of integrated teaching has evolved (Billis, 1984).

Peer-group Response

If equality of opportunity is a goal of integration, how do other children respond to the incoming, integrated individuals? Salisbury School, in Enfield, was purpose-designed to accommodate wheelchairs, devised lengthy and elaborate preparation for integration with parents, staff and pupils, but still recorded problems of peer group adjustment. Some of the able-bodied pupils felt guilty if they disliked a disabled pupil, so

conditioned are we to pity as a reflex response. They resented the fact that disabled pupils were taking up a disproportionate amount of the teachers' time, and they felt neglected. They regarded it as unfair that pupils with disabilities were released from the punishment imposed on the rest of the class - detentions after school - as the disabled group had to go home at 3.30 on their special transport. It must be noted that whilst these issues were talked through and resolved (the disabled pupils having to take their detentions in the lunch-hours, for example) the fact that such problems developed indicates the complexities of assisting social integration, when faced by peer group pressure to conform.

What is apparent in the issues examined in this assessment of the placement model of integration is that it is essentially conservative, preserving the status quo in supporting an acceptable, desirable convention of normality, as in normal school and normal society. It is an inadequate model because only a select group can achieve full, functional integration, both educationally and socially. Those who are integrated rarely become active participants in the institution or society into which they are incorporated, so lowly is their status. The impact of legislation has been weak, as the disabled are a minority group, without power and influence. The authorities are unlikely to create cohesive national policy without the sustained effect of a challenge to the system.

Chapter 4

CHALLENGING THE SYSTEM

The difficulty of challenging the current system in order to facilitate the integration process is examined by assessing the problem of minority status in society and the difficulty of acquiring the power to participate in decision-making and policy-directing. Special needs provision has increasingly entailed the process of intervention through a programme of intensive task analysis and monitoring of progress. This is challenged with the need to accept differences and value individuals outside norm-related judgements.

A placement model refers to Disability from the security of the normal perspective. An alternative perception is to regard the disabled as the norm within a sick society in need of radical reform. Oliver refers to the personal tragedy theory of disability as having, like all other victim-blaming theories ,

> ..served to individualise the problems of disability and hence to leave social and economic structures untouched..
> (Oliver, 1986, p.7)

Finkelstein (1981) suggests that the dependent status of disabled people leads to their dominance by normal society in which they have to tolerate this impaired level of social participation as the norm . A focus upon the problem of being in a wheelchair, for example, avoids the issue of equal participation.

It is not just in regard to disability - in the sense of physical handicap - that a change of emphasis is occuring. In-service training for secondary school teachers, at Cardiff University, encourages concentration upon the institutional and social context from which behavioural problems have emerged, rather than upon the individuals, and their problems:

> ..perhaps some aspects of the school system could be contributory factors e.g. the examinations, the syllabus, the streaming, the setting, the pastoral care, the links with parents..
> (Davie, Phillips, Callely, 1985, p.5)

In accord with this critical examination of the context of special needs, Mary Warnock has offered a re-evaluation of the 1978 Report,

> ..if I have one regret..it is that we did not..make serious and concrete recommendations for a flexible curriculum..only within the framework of such new curriculum thinking could the demand that the needs of all children be met be seen as anything but empty rhetoric.. (Warnock, 1983, p.10)

The Fish Report (1985) not only acknowledged that schools can create their own special problems, by failing to match pupil needs with appropriate curriculum content and teaching method, but also expressed concern about the high proportion of Afro-Carribean parents unhappy about their children's placement in special education.

From Warnock, through the 1981 Act, to Fish, there has been a re-evaluation of the criteria which define special educational need , to preclude language and cultural differences, and an acknowledgement of the rights of parents to become involved in the assessment and placement of their child with special needs. The Fish Report proposes a progression from individual assimilation into an unchallenged curriculum, which has characterised the placement model, to a modification of the curriculum to suit all levels of need, which will inevitably challenge the political and social system in which integration develops.

Minority Status

However, an iniquitous system will remain unchallenged while the dependent status of minority groups is perpetuated. Oliver suggests that deficit theory is one of many explanations

offered for poor educational achievement, focusing, again, upon the deficiencies of the individual rather than upon social and economic structures (Oliver, 1986). The impact of social and economic structures is reflected in the poor educational results in deprived, urban environments in contrast to good results in affluent, suburban settings which are tabulated annually in the national poll of public examination results (TES, 1985). Compensating for inequality through providing a special curriculum for minority groups can perpetuate rather than remedy the cycle of deficit, as

> ..in terms of the normal goals of the school that they attend, they will be offered a non-education , which will fit them only for low-status employment or unemployment..
> (Tomlinson, 1982, p.155)

Poverty breeds extreme dependency, and many people with disabilities are caught in a poverty trap. This can apply to families caring for disabled children (Townsend, 1981); to families where poverty and unemployment foster special educational needs (Booth, 1982), to young people with disabilities leaving school (Walker, 1982; Bookis, 1983; Hirst 1984) and to married couples and single people with disabilities, trying to live in the community (Shearer, 1982). People with disabilities, trapped in long-term unemployment, are relegated to a dependent status, denied social participation and officially regarded as helpless (Topliss, 1979; Blaxter, 1980; Walker & Townsend, 1981). Those with disabilities are not the only minority group caught within this trap - they are, however, the least likely to escape it.

Finkelstein (1980) illustrates this dependent status, by reversing roles, and creating a society in which being able-bodied is a severe disadvantage as all social life is designed for people in wheelchairs. Rooms are low-ceilinged and the able-

bodied have to double up in discomfort in order to participate in a life where they are second-rate citizens. He places able-bodied normal people in the position which people in wheelchairs have to accept as their normal role: humiliated, ignored because they reflect minority interest, disregarded because the majority were fortunate enough to avoid their experience. Finkelstein was asking: wouldn't this make you feel angry and frustrated? Yet, because their cultural and social needs can be over-ruled by the majority, minority groups are expected to accept their place within society without anger or recrimination.

The Power to Participate

Power is about participating in government and policy-making. Whilst British culture and language remains dominant, we cannot be termed a multicultural society in the way in which Quebec or Brussels can, for there two ethnic groups share political power and their languages are equally used throughout government (Rex & Tomlinson, 1979). There are few examples of parliamentary voices representing minority opinion, and fewer still who experience minority status whilst in positions of power. Jack Ashley, M.P., might be viewed as a powerful and successful model of a person who has coped with disability, yet it is significant that he acquired his disabled identity late in life, and had already assumed the confidence of a member of the majority. Power involves demanding justice and receiving it. The Fish Report expresses concern that 57% of Afro-Carribean parents, as compared to 22% of other parents with children in special education, were dissatisfied with the way in which their children were placed in special schools (Fish, 1985). The over-representation of West Indian children in specific areas of special schooling has made some parents cautious of the influence

of special education generally (Tomlinson, 1984). Although such parents formed pressure groups, they lacked the political force to change the system or to end social injustice.

Lack of power precludes choice. Limited literacy skills can further restrict choice and make people susceptible to manipulation (Davison, 1985), and vulnerable to the incitement to riot (Jenkins, 1985). An example of recent riots, at the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham, yielded the Gifford Report (1986), in which recommendations on Participation in Education were particularly relevant to the status of minorities. The Report acknowledged that the education system had failed young Black people, who had rarely reached their potential, and called for action to make a reality of the council's anti-racist position, by removing racist bias from the curriculum, training teachers to counteract racism and, of great importance, by positively encouraging the employment of Black people as teachers and role models (Gifford, 1986). Such a policy for change, however, operates against the prevailing model of intensive intervention to change the child. It has always been easier to change the individual rather than to change the system.

Models of Intervention

This has traditionally been effected by providing a model of progressive stages towards normal development for individuals deemed to have special educational needs.

From pre-school to post-school stages, curriculum packages have been designed to assist teachers and other professionals who work with young people with special needs (Portage, Pieterse, 1982: Ainscow, 1984; Whelan, Speake, Strickland, 1984; Bradley, 1985). The 1981 Act spurred this impetus, as mainstream teachers sought comprehensive guides to children with special needs . Although it provides valuable expertise, this model of

intervention remains severely restricted, and can lead to misuse or deliberate rejection of the programmes which are offered. Just as there are no normal schools, there are no fixed patterns of special educational need. It is essential to observe the context in which the special need exists. This is not to disregard the value of such curriculum material, which is linking special and mainstream education, and assisting in the de-mythologising of the specialist. Assessing a child's learning problems within the classroom and school has gained increasing credence as it allows a holistic approach with observation of the child in relation to the educational environment (Willey, 1985) and one in which class teachers are more likely to implement teaching programmes as they are involved in the process of assessment and planning (Stott Green & Francis, 1983; Stobart & Trickey, 1985).

Although the involvement of mainstream teachers within the institutional setting offers an enhanced level of participation, it still works to fit the child within the system in which she/he is a participant. An example of this approach from post-school provision illustrates the constrictions it imposes. These suggestions are from a guide to social skills for adult training centre trainees with severe learning difficulties, compiled by collaborating with staff in many Centres throughout the country:

> ..22.1. Response to authority.
> Can recognise those with appropriate authority over him in the work situation and responds to this in a co-operative and positive manner.
> ..24.4. Exercise of foresight and initiative.
> Can anticipate consequences of actions and take steps to ensure appropriate outcome..
> (Whelan, Speake, & Strickland, 1984, p.96)

Objectives such as these are unrealistic, paternalistic, and dangerous. Normal society cannot be relied upon to offer a model of justice and equality. If figures of authority are

unjust and domineering, is it not dangerous to teach people, who might have had negligible experience of defending their rights, to be co-operative in all circumstances? It is often difficult for people with severe learning difficulties to generalise from their experience, and they are, therefore, vulnerable to indoctrination.

Accepting Differences

It is presumptious of us to assume that they should accept society's conventions and fit a nebulous concept of the norm, for

> ..to claim that they are ordinary and just like anyone else or must be made to become so, is to belittle them, to disregard the very positive qualities of their nature..Intensive training programmes to teach socially acceptable behaviour can, if pushed too far, result in the suppression of spontaneous expression, the negation of personality..
> (West, 1985, p.13)

This was said by a mother of a young woman with Down's Syndrome, who was disturbed by the imposition of society's norms upon her daughter's assertive personality. If her daughter wanted to dance in the street, who was to say it was abnormal? With reference to objective 24.4, teaching people to anticipate the consequences of their own actions is only realistic at a superficial level. Trainees can learn that if they bring no money to the centre, they cannot afford to pay for lunch, but can any of us know what the outcome of all our actions might be at a more complex level? When we enter into personal relationships, when we take postions of responsibility, or when we use our initiative to instigate change we are chancing with fate. Our level of anticipation is invariably complicated by the imponderables of living in a complex society. To suggest that people with severe learning difficulties will only be dealing with simple actions in which they can learn to predict the outcome is to denigrate them to a powerless minority status.

The American Self Advocacy Manual, We Are People First states that

> ..Each of us is different; we all have certain strengths and weaknesses. We all have the right to be the way we are and to become the way we want to be..
> (McGill, 1982, p.213)

Yet people with disabilities, particularly if they are intellectually handicapped, are often denied the opportunity to be the way they want to be. People with physical or intellectual disabilities, who have grown used to a dependent status, rarely become confidant advocates. Just as Gifford recommends positive discrimination to counteract educational inequality, so the self-advocacy movement has developed to promote political power for people with special needs. Advocacy operates at different levels. The Fish Report refers to the named person or citizen advocate as the representative of people with severe learning difficulties (Fish, 1985). This is the professional advocate. Training for parents of children with learning difficulties has been developed to teach them to write statements, to select a school and to understand the 1981 Act (Juneidi, 1984; ACE., 1984). This supports parents as advocates.

The most radical example of the advocacy movement is that of self-advocacy, which assists people with disabilities to find their own voice of protest, and to assert themselves (Bourlet, 1985; Cooper & Hersov, 1986). The National Bureau for Handicapped Students has recently initiated Self-advocacy courses, to train staff to develop these skills in people with learning difficulties. The expansion of self-advocacy is illustrated by the report of a campaign to include adult training centre trainees in the National Union of Students in 1981, and an account of implementing change within a centre in 1985 (Hencke, 1981; Bourlet, 1985). The former simply sought inclusion in

mainstream student life; the latter demanded change in status and participation. Trainees were being denied entry to the centre in the mornings, whilst staff could enter as they arrived. The trainees' advocate demanded access on arrival and the opportunity to have hot drinks before starting work. These might appear trivial matters, but they represent an enhanced level of participation within the institution. Self-advocacy can be fostered by encouraging performance as

> ..performance gives the performer power..for a disabled person it can be nothing short of revolutionary..for it is not generally accepted by society that disabled people are initiators of activities, that they are in charge, or can take command..(Tomlinson. R, 1982, p.11).

Audiences can be surprised, embarrassed and shocked to discover that performers with physical handicaps can laugh at themselves and mock words like spastic (Dury, 1981), and that actors can overcome their disabilities to perform normal roles with conviction (GLAD, 1984). Both visual performance and creative writing are expressions of self-advocacy which serve to benefit both participant and recipient: they increase the confidence of the former (Bayliss, 1983); they dissolve the stereotype for the latter.

Biklen, in his Organising Manual for Advocates and Parents , offers guidance to parents in responding to those who resist change , as for example

> ..When schools or institutions say to parents we can't spend all of our time on your child you can point out that while you agree and sympathise it is the school's or institution's responsibility to serve your child. The school must adapt or adjust to your child.. (Biklen, 1979, p.83)

This stance reminds us that the institution is there to serve the public, and that parents should retain the power they too readily relinquish. There has been a growing awareness among low-income parents that special education can often serve to disadvantage

their child,

> ..sometimes because labelling a child as mentally retarded becomes the only or the most convenient way to shunt the low income child who is a management learning problem out of the regular classroom into a segregated special class..
> (Budoff, 1975 p.4)

Budoff's research in America reflects Tomlinson's investigations in Britain, in recognising that,

> ..the euphemism of a special class was actually operated as a dumping ground for problem children.. (p.5)

The Black Parent's Groups which formed to challenge the iniquitous system which saw a disproportionate number of Black children in special education in Britain was paralleled in Boston in 1968, when local residents in the poorest district issued a report entitled End Educational Entombment . The fight for parent's rights has been mounting since the 1960s. It might be supposed that, after the publication of the Fish Report in 1985, ILEA at least would foster a policy of integration. It appears, however, that parents there, as elsewhere, have to fight every step of the way,

> ..for every compromise reached, considerable personal struggle and not a little pain is involved for the parents..some parents have had to go to extraordinary lengths to get their children integrated..
> (Vogel, 1986, p.6)

In such a climate it is not surprising that only the most determined parents can fight through to the end.

Stages towards fostering a change of power are in teaching deinstitutionalised people to use the DHSS, welfare rights and housing (Godding, 1983), making curriculum content relevant to all cultural groups and educational needs, training staff to employ non-discriminating policies towards minorities, and operating a policy of positive discrimination in employment and promotion of people from minorities. The mainstreaming process implies a change of power, for

> ..if integration is to have any major significance, then the struggle for its realisation must include a coherent, concentrated criticism of those unacceptable features of the education system and a demand for more fundamental social changes..
> (Barton & Tomlinson, 1984, p.79)

Unfortunately, resistance to change is endemic. Biklen (1979) cites the following reasons why people resist change: they become set in their ways, disagree as to what needs changing; fear a diminished professional status; identify with their organisation which they see being threatened; become overwhelmed by the enormity of the task and are reluctant to alter established habits and procedures (1979). My experience of being involved in a process of change is that people generally respond most enthusiastically when given impetus from the highest authority. Habitual patterns of behaviour are uncomfortable to break, and change will not be effected unless cushioned by corporate commitment.

Section II

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

Chapter 5

INFLUENCES IN FURTHER EDUCATION

In moving from Section One into Section Two I am examining the development of provision for students with special needs in relation to general issues in integration. Integration in further education shares many features of integration in general. There are the same difficulties in implementing change, discrimination against minorities and a pattern of assimilation of the more acceptable special needs yet segregation of the socially stigmatised categories. The move towards increased independence for people with disabilities through community housing and innovative day care provision is very relevant to further education and its relationship with the neighbourhood. Despite the association between general issues and the developments in further education, there are specific characteristics which mark further education out from compulsory education, not least its post-school nature and its role as a link between school and the world of work or higher education.

This chapter, which introduces the background context for the case study on integration in further education, examine those areas which influence further education. As this is a local, responsive service, I consider how location influences the development of a college, how its historical growth affects attitudes and how the development of policy, both at L.E.A. and institutional level, will direct provision. To illustrate the contrasting developments of colleges under different influences, I firstly examine a technical college and then a community college. Examples of these contrasting forms of provision are examined in the case study in which two very different colleges are situated in the same London borough.

Location

Whereas a university will draw upon students from all over the country and remain independent and academic, an area college is designed to be responsive, open to change and vocational (Burgess, 1977). Within this clearly defined role, each college will vary according to local needs. Colleges in Hull and Plymouth developed courses in Nautical Studies ; colleges in Nottinghamshire, Mining Studies ; colleges in central London, a wide range of specialist areas like Fashion and Furniture . Rural areas might focus upon agriculture; urban areas look to the needs of local industry. As further education colleges are community facilities, they must relate to a broad range of need, which will vary according to the local economic climate. In many inner-city areas, with high rates of unemployment and poverty, further education joins with adult education to offer a comprehensive service to the local community. This enables adults to attend a wide range of daytime and evening provision and opens the resource to those with different special needs (Billis, 1984).

History

The historical background of a college of further education will influence its relationship with the community. In London, for example, technical institutes developed from adult education evening classes until by 1903 there were 26 in existence (Devereux, 1982). The technical institutes and polytechnics were run in a co-operative organisation, so that progression between the two was facilitated. Technical institutes were designed to concentrate upon Vocational and Technical Training for those generally in the 16-19 age range. The junior technical institutes, phased out with the 1960s comprehensive movement, concentrated upon a similar emphasis for the 13-16 age group.

Where colleges grew from an amalgamation of technical college and adult education, they are often scattered around a borough, in many different, unlikely locations, like huts and church halls. There are now several newly-designated community colleges , or tertiary colleges, with a clearly defined role in relation to local needs. They might be housed in newly-built premises, but will more likely be in disused school or college buildings.

Policy

It is important to assess what the LEA expects of its further education service and how further education relates to LEA policy generally, as, for example, to a policy for Equal Opportunities . In examining LEA policy on planning and resourcing further education provision, it is important to decide if priorities are serving national or local needs.

Although I am cautious of any implication that a type of further education college exists, the following characteristics of two contrasting models will offer a perspective of the examples represented in the case study.

A Technical College

A technical institute would have grown from separate areas of industry and commerce: hairdressing and office skills in one area, building and engineering in another. Staff were selected who offered expertise and experience in vocational and technical areas, and many were not trained teachers. Although the 1944 Education Act indicated that the role of further education was to offer both educational and recreational provision, the more traditional technical institutes tended to concentrate on the former rather than the latter. An educational, rather than recreational, role was allowed to take precedence as technical institutes sought to maintain the prestige of polytechnics, by fostering advanced work which enhanced the college reputation,

developed promotion prospects for staff and preserved a selected intake. This self-preservation was directed against rather than for the minority interests in the local community, in that it was selective in its response to need. It could, for example, serve the boss rather than the workers, as Tipton (1973) illustrates in the example of students sent to college by a firm of building contractors: the firm requested that marketing was not taught although this was a subject which the students particularly requested. The implication was that workers were not to be taught management strategies and such value judgement surely mitigated against the principles of responsive further education. When a choice had to be made between gaining status within the managerial section of the community or serving the interests of employees, the college opted for the former. Such an example calls into question the community role played by such traditional colleges. Their historical development tends to make them, and their senior staff, conservative and complacent, prefering to maintain the status they acquired over the years rather than adapt to local changes.

Many technical colleges have grown very large, as departments have been added over the years. This sectional growth of disparate departments, each with its own ethos and status, impedes cohesion or the development of a corporate identity. Instead, the competition and professional rivalry that develops can be damaging to the value placed on teaching skills, for promotion depends upon administrative skill rather than classroom expertise (Tipton, 1973).

Where an undervaluing of teaching method, and fostering of competition is prevelant sub-groups can develop, especially where certain sections of the college community consider that they are being denied a fair share of the prestigious work. If advanced

work is equated with status, then those in the technical college who are engaged on non-advanced work will inevitably begin to form a sub-group, likely to develop grievances. The traditional technical college is nearer in character to a polytechnic than to a community college of further education. A technical college which was established over fifty years ago, in an inner London borough, would then have served a very different population, in a different economic and social climate, than it serves in the 1980s.

It may have responded appropiately to local demands when first established - serving local industries and providing popular vocational training. It may, however, have failed to change in relation to changes in the community. I have offered suggestions as to why technical colleges promoted advanced work at the expense of the non-advanced. Resistance to change weakened contact with the local community. A long established educational establishment will tend to value the tried and tested, rather than risk the new. Within a traditional model innovation of teaching approaches, curriculum and values is likely to be resisted and regarded as a threat.

A Community College

Unlike the traditional technical college the emphasis in a community college is not necessarily upon Vocational and Technical Training . It might be on aspects of adult education - a mixture of 'O' level and recreational provision - and it might be on Pre-Vocational Training . Rather than focusing upon the 16-19 age range, as technical colleges tend to, it will offer provision to students of all ages and educational background. If a college is to serve the community then it must offer ease of access, in terms of educational pre-conditions, physical access and pastoral support. Community colleges tend to be smaller than

technical colleges, and the competitive climate is modified accordingly. As the college has a specific role to serve community needs, the expansion of advanced work to develop prestige cannot take precedence. In such conditions teaching is regarded as important, and individual student needs become a priority. Flexibility and adaptation to change are endemic in a situation where the educational institution is directed by its members. Those who feel threatened by change are unlikely to seek employment in a new community college, as its role and structure will be immediately evident to them. Clearly, the level of participation, both at institutional and community level, is greater than in a technical college. Corporate identity is easier to establish in a smaller, more cohesive establishment, where staff share a common goal. Students can become active participants within an institution which provides ease of access and promotes self-advocacy: they are made to fell that the college is there to serve their needs. The college can respond to minority groups in the community with an emphasis on student need rather than national reputation. Whilst large technical colleges, like polytechnics, draw their students from a wide geographical area, and can afford to ignore local needs, community colleges must serve those needs, and become integral participants in their community in order to survive.

The case study examines two colleges of further education located in the London Borough of Harefield. The focus is on Fraser College, a traditional technical college, established since the late 1800s, in the centre of the borough. The population it served then can bear no relation to that which it serves in the 1980s. It grew and greatly expanded over the years, to become a very successful technical college, serving a wide area. However, it virtually ignored local needs, which had

changed dramatically and been affected by racial tensions, unemployment and contracting industrial opportunities. Spencer College, a community college was opened in Harefield in 1983, to respond to those needs being neglected by Fraser College. It was placed in a disused school building some miles from the imposing facade of the technical college. It operated a policy of anti-discrimination, encouraging minority groups to participate in their community provision. The differences in staff attitudes, curriculum provision and administration will be illustrated in the study. Although the case study is essentially about how integration operated within Fraser College, it is also about borough policy towards integration and towards further education.

Chapter 6

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS: INNOVATION AND REALITY

In this chapter, I examine research developments in the field of special needs in further education. I discuss the work of the pioneers and innovators in this field in relation to general national developments. Research which sought to prove the value of further education for special school leavers is evaluated and the exceptional college in which the fieldwork took place compared with less favoured colleges. The influential work of the Further Education Unit is discussed in the light of its publications, the impact of specialist colleges on integration and the assessment of student needs examined and the implications of national curriculum initiatives for Social Education Centres investigated. The emphasis is upon relating innovation, in publications and models of good practice, with the reality of what was happening in many colleges.

As provision for students with special needs was dramatically expanding in further education so research to foster this expansion proliferated. The period from 1982 to 1986 saw the publication of several research documents: it is also the period in which I was engaged in the role of a participant-researcher. In examining these research documents and their influence, I will assess how closely they relate to my concurrent experiences.

The Innovators

In the same year as the publication of the Warnock Report (1978), Bolton College of Education, in association with the National Bureau for Handicapped Students, staged a three-day study-conference to consider the Warnock recommendations related to young people over the statutory school-leaving age and discuss the practical implications involved. George Cooke, as a member

of the Warnock Committee, expressed his desire to see more post-16 provision available within colleges of further education and adult training centres. Denis Coe, of the National Bureau for Handicapped Students, referred to the examples of existing provision outlined in the 1975 Survey carried out by the National Council for Special Education. The results of this survey indicated the wide range of provision which was required, ranging from Link courses or integration onto existing courses. Norman Clegg, Principal of North Nottinghamshire College, discussed an integrated approach to students with special needs. His was one of the pioneering colleges in this field, where a whole-college approach had actively fostered the expansion of provision. HMIs Freddie Green and Jean McGinty (1979) emphasised the importance of curriculum and its implications for change in teaching content and method, and David Hutchinson, responsible for students with special needs at North Notts. College, assessed the impact of student needs on college management and course design. The report of this Conference, published under the title Further Education for Handicapped Students in 1979, was seminal to the growth of awareness and provision in this field. It combined the national overview of HMIs and DES Officers with regional expertise in the area of special needs in further education. The model of interaction between teacher, subject and student and recognition of complex learning needs discussed by Green and McGinty (p.40-41) was to be developed further into material for the 1985 publication, From Coping to Confidence (Bradley, 1985). Hutchinson's examination of student needs and methods of assessment were also to be expanded within that later publication.

General Developments

Whilst the developments illustrated in this publication were

to be widely influential, they were in no respect representative of developments generally. North Nottinghamshire College was an example of quite exceptional productivity in the area of special needs provision. This was created by its combination of those advantages seen by researchers of integration to fuel success: an enthusiastic and charismatic Principal in Norman Clegg, a carefully orchestrated pattern of staff development, a whole-college problem-solving approach and an LEA committed to the long-term development of special needs provision. Within this context - and, I would maintain, within this context only - an example of successful integration can be illustrated. from my perspective, at Fraser College, I could only admire the diversity of provision at North Notts. and agree with the model of teaching method proposed, but remain frustrated and confined within the situation in which I found myself. If the foundations for integration are not established, research documents illustrating examples of good practice only heighten the gap between favoured and disadvantaged positions. As later research was to indicate that provision was irregular and erratic throughout the country (Bradley & Hegarty, 1982), it is unlikely that many colleges were able to implement the policies employed at North Notts. North Notts. has continued to be a centre for innovation, the most recent example being the introduction of a curriculum framework for students with severe physical disability, to be launched in March 1987 (Hutchinson, 1986). This will be in the form of a document published by the Further Education Unit, which has been at the forefront of curriculum research.

I cite the example of North Notts. as a contrast to the more familiar situation of coping with apathetic management, low status of special needs and inadequate resources, because I consider that it highlights the dilemma of drawing upon research

generally. Unfortunately, much innovative research develops alongside out-dated malpractice. As CERI published their report on initiatives towards a more integrated provision for adolescents with special needs, drawn upon examples throughout Europe (1981), an article in the journal of the National Bureau for Handicapped Students, Educare, indicated the need for students with disabilities to adapt to the system, requiring specific personality traits and levels of social competence (Cannell, 1981). The former was a world away from the latter, with its emphasis upon the system suiting the student instead of the student requiring the skills to adapt to fit in. However, despite my preference for the former model, my experience during the early 1980s was that only those students who were tenacious enough to sustain themselves against all obstacles survive the pace - and that the odds were stacked against them.

Proving Value

When Newton and Robinson (1982) published their research on the value of further education to special school leavers it marked a critically important challenge to colleges. They explained, to an eager audience of college principals (including the Principal of Fraser College), careers officers, special school teachers and educational psychologists, that their findings were that Link courses for special school leavers were beneficial in enhancing employment opportunities and developing maturity and general competence. The research indicated that the Link courses could offer a wide range of curricula, could focus on basic skills for those needing this provision, would offer progression to a more advanced course following a broad general education, could offer positive discrimination in terms of material, staffing and financial resources and allow for functional integration. A Link course was selected in order to

offer the opportunity for comparison between the group selected for the once-a week Link and the non-link group, as they were following the same curriculum at school. The benefits of the Link Course were studied in three ways:

> ..in terms of short-term educational and social gains during the year; in terms of the extent to which it aided the transition into open employment; and in terms of the extent to which it encouraged young people to enter full-time further education..
> (Newton & Robinson, 1982, p.21)

This research illustrates the prevalent mood in further education in the early 1980s. The influence of the MSC was beginning to gain ground and college principals could justifiably feel threatened by the the new wave of training provision which was attracting potential students away from traditional further education. The increase in unemployment was hastening the closure of many long-established areas of vocational work in colleges. The time was right for innovation in further education. Newton and Robinson's research indicated that provision within colleges of further education was of direct benefit to students with learning difficulties and with varied special needs. The report was saying what principals and LEA officers wanted to hear and it heralded the growth of such courses throughout Britain.

However, the success of the Course in this Brixton college has to be measured against the advantages it had over many other institutions. Like North Notts., Brixton College, where the Link Course took place, had an enviable reputation for its work in the area of special needs . Again it had an enthusiastic and innovative Principal in John Baillie, a whole-college policy on Special Needs , planned staff development and priority of resources in this area. John Baillie has always fought the low Burnham grading of special needs work and accorded it high

status within his college: consequently it had become a priority area. The choice of college, in itself, indicates a degree of selection within the project. Had Newton and Robinson chosen to research provision at Fraser College, for example, they would have found no Link Course established and a Principal who, despite attending their project discussion, resisted the inclusion of course provision for students with moderate or severe learning difficulties. I am not implying that all colleges were as impervious to the wave of new provision as was Fraser College, but that few would have reflected the ideal conditions offered by Brixton College. Naturally, as I have already established in examining successful examples of integration schemes, the selection of an appropriate and receptive institution is of fundamental importance to the progression of the research. However, this element of selectivity has to be measured against what was happening in other more typical colleges.

Restricted Choice

In two East London colleges, for example, the choice of curriculum on Link Courses was confined to what the college could slot students into within their existing provision, so the main subjects were catering, craft and metalwork:

> ..There is a wider range of courses that appeal to the boys, and all of the courses except typing are popular with them. In contrast the girls are reluctant to attend woodwork or metalwork..the result of this, apart from the perpetuation of sexual stereotypes has been the fragmentation of the class as a group. The boys and girls tend to be at college in separate groups and are rarely in school at the same time..
> (Cooper, S. 1985, p.30)

Cooper's research indicates the more usual restrictions of options within such course and the problems this creates within the composition of the group. In the school-link which Cooper researched it was the whole school-leavers class who were

involved, which is generally the case. However in the research carried out at Brixton College, there was selectivity before entry into the Link Course. The class teachers had selected those pupils they considered most likely to benefit form a Link course, in terms of their maturity, academic ability, social skills and stability. Although Newton and Robinson measured their progress against that of a comparable group and not those within their class who had not been selected, nonetheless the element of selectivity is of critical importance in defining the success of the students. It is likely that this selected group would have made good progress anyway, and gained employment upon leaving school, without the aid of the Link Course, although the Link and subsequent full-time further education provision could not but benefit those students deemed to be motivated, capable and receptive to learning.

I was able to observe the effect of a selective system within one borough, from my own experience, and was placed in a position where I was taking into my Bridging Course those students who had not been selected for integration in earlier school schemes. I could appreciate how satisfying it must be to support students through a link from school into further education and progression in the system. Where the provision at Brixton was offering stages of progression to enable students to climb the ladder, whilst accepting the preliminary selection process by which students joined the courses, I was placed in a position where I had no initial filtering process, yet a system which provided a chasm where the lower rungs of the ladder should be.

The Further Education Unit

The most fruitful source of research material during the 1980s has been developed through the Further Education Unit.

This was established to promote, encourage and develop efficient provision of further education in the UK. 1981 showed an increased awareness of the importance of this area of provision with the publication of a report of a Conference, Provision Within F.E. for Students with Special Educational needs (Regional Advisory Council for Technological Education, November, 1980), a report from the NBHS on Further Education, Training and Employment Opportunities for Handicapped People (National Bureau for Handicapped Students, July, 1981) and a review of research relating to young people with special needs, produced by the FEU, Students with Special Needs in F.E. (Bradley, J. and Hegarty, S., October, 1981). The latter offers a particularly comprehensive over-view of research developments, including those which examine work preparation opportunities for students with moderate learning difficulties (Speake & Whelan, 1977; Roberts & Williams, 1980; Hegarty & Pocklington, 1981). The notable change of emphasis from work preparation to a more general pre-vocational training in the period between 1976-86 reflects the declining economic situation. The difficulty for Special School leavers in obtaining regular employment was examined, in the light of this increasing economic instability (Tuckey, 1973; Walker, 1976/1980).

An indication of the responsive rather than evaluative role of the FEU is that on the recommendations of this report of October 1981 that what was required were three major areas of investigation, reports on all three were published in December 1982. Making Progress? (Roberts, J.E., Norwich, B. and Wedell, K.) Stretching the System (Bradley, J. and Hegarty, S.) and Skills for Living (Further Education Unit) were direct responses to requests for a picture of overall national provision, curriculum development for students with learning

difficulties and assessment procedures, to be received as complementary texts, illuminating but not challenging the existing provision.

Making Progress

Making Progress? (Roberts J.E., Norwich, B. & Wedell, K. Dec. 1982) examines assessment procedures for students with moderate learning difficulties, to be used at entry to, during the course of, and on completion of further education (Hutchinson, 1982). This document reflects the increased emphasis to be placed upon assessment, in a course structure which was unrelated to external examination criteria. Whilst designing courses around student needs was to be encouraged in theory, the assessment procedures which evolved from this created mounting administrative responsibilities in practice. As Individual Education Programmes are much abused in practice, because of the paperwork they necessitate, so the profiling system has become, for many staff, yet another burden rather than a welcome innovation.

Stretching the System

Stretching the System , (Bradley, J. and Hegarty, S. Dec. 1982) included an examination of 16-19 provision in schools, specialist colleges and the YOP schemes, adult education and ATCs, as well as the mixture of mainstream courses, link courses, bridging courses, special courses and separate units available within colleges of further education. They concluded that provision was at a developmental stage nationally, and, as such, was patchy and irregular, leaving critical gaps in some areas, so that students with certain special needs were neglected. There was a lack of co-operation and co-ordination between specialist and mainstream staff which hampered curriculum development. Provision was observed to have grown in an ad hoc manner, which

threatened to lead to a waste of resources in duplication. Ending on an optimistic note, Bradley and Hegarty saw the value to mainstream further education of incorporating special needs work into the system, as the methods involved would benefit a wide range of students. This anticipated the wave of new developments, like CPVE and YTS, which would employ similar approaches to assessment and teaching method.

Skills for Living

Skills for Living (Further Education Unit, Dec. 1982) examined the curriculum framework for students with moderate learning difficulties, using task analysis diagrams to illustrate objectives such as To get on with other people . Examples of the target group and their specific problems were offered and evaluated. This approach to curriculum design was exciting and innovative in that it broke the constricting hold of repetitive emphasis on numeracy and literacy rote learning which was perpetuated in many special schools for children with moderate learning difficulties. Students were learning to understand themselves and the society around them , to make good use of their time , and to present themselves well , as a more positive approach than a narrow focus on their learning problems. However, in the focus upon directing the attitudes and social behaviour of young people on the periphery of the employment market, there is surely an element of patronising control, which Moos (1983) and Finn (1984) viewed with suspicion. When the affective area of the curriculum becomes its overt core, the imposition of alien values upon a suppressed minority requires challenging (Tomlinson, 1984; Hargreaves, 1985).

The Specialist College

The 1980s saw an increased understanding among a wide range of practitioners of the complex role of the specialist college.

Jowett's 1982 study of students with physical handicaps attending St. Loyes College for Training the Disabled for Commerce and Industry examined vocational and social progress, the relationship between the nature and the degree of handicap, employment experience and the students' perceptions of the course. The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus sponsored a project to examine the training of students with this condition, based at Derwent College and another to investigate the effects of hydrocephalus on vocational and non-vocational training, based at Banstead Place. An experimental course of further education and social learning was described by staff from Beaumont College (Special Education Journal , June 1982). This course was designed for students who had a physical handicap, specific learning difficulties and were socially and personally immature. Students had individual timetables to suit their specific needs, the curriculum including a range of practical skills and recreational interests such as Activities of Daily Living , Community Experience , Personal and Social Development and Adult Education Class in the Local Community . The course was concerned with the overall development of the student, and focused upon enhancing community participation, rather than being caught in formal examination restrictions. The validity of such an emphasis was gaining impetus throughout the 1980s, culminating in the national dissemination of Learning for Independence (Dean & Hegarty) in 1984.

Assessing Needs

Reports indicated that in order to understand student needs the use of blanket labelling had to be rejected. This applied to all groups of students who needs additional services of any kind, including those often labelled deaf or physically handicapped , and expected to conform to a type:

> ..The identification of students through the use of labels such as deaf or hearing-impaired gives little clue to the provision required, as is the case for some other groups of handicapped people. In reality, deaf or hearing impaired people represent a very broad spectrum of achievements and needs..
> (Report of National Study Group on Further & Higher Education for the Hearing Impaired, November, 1983).

In 1980 Panckhurst and McAllister's report on the developments of provision for students with physical disabilities at the specialist college, Hereward College in Coventry, was published. It revealed the different needs of students with physical handicaps and the significant learning implications of students with complex disabilities like spina bifida and hydrocephalus. This report indicates the great value of the specialist colleges as centres of research and information. Gaining experience from a wide range of students with different special needs associated with physical handicap, they have much to offer the traditional college of further education in terms of specialist expertise.

Yet, despite the potential for developing a co-operative approach between specialist and mainstream further education, my experience was that such a sharing of expertise was elusive and difficult to sustain. It is not unexpected that the resistance to change and mutual mistrust, commonly experienced in relations between special and mainstream schools, should again be reflected in further education. The narrow stereotyping of physical handicap , challenged in the research from specialist colleges, was to be perpetuated in the response of management and staff at Fraser College. Similarly it took me three years to develop sufficient reciprocal contribution to teaching method and curriculum to ensure a course component would include the techniques of the specialist college in the mainstream setting, for example, helping staff divide tasks into small, manageable steps. Incorporating specialist techniques requires more than a

wealth of literature from the FEU. It requires a sharing of those skills developed over years within the voluntary and specialist FE sector. Lecturers in further education, like teachers in schools, need to feel that they want to change teaching methods and curriculum content, and consultation will offer more support than literature alone: ideally the latter should never be divorced from the former.

Yet, interest in the area of special provision in further education was not confined to specialist publications as the coverage of a special course at Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology in the NATFHE Journal indicated (March, 1985). Nor was the opportunity for progression for students with special educational needs restricted to special, segregated courses, as TVEI and the new initiatives were designed to incorporate these students (Cooper, June 1984). Research in the 1980s which illustrated the misconceptions perpetuated by narrow labelling was to foster a more adventurous approach to placing students with special needs in post-school provision, and the new FE (as CPVE and YTS were to be termed) was to offer a platform for progression. In 1984 the FEU published Routes to Coping (Dee) and Learning for Independence (Dean and Hegarty) which offered curriculum guidelines for students with both moderate and severe learning difficulties. The latter publication focused upon the needs of people being trained in Adult Training Centres , or Social Education Centres as they were to become. This emphasis indicated that curriculum innovation was to include those student groups which, until 1971, were placed outside the perimeters of educational provision. Research in this area supported the concept of education being a long-term provision which applied to all levels of ability and degrees of need. Learning for Independence gave status to the work being conducted in ATCs,

which had often been disregarded in the past, and Routes to Coping offered examples of innovative practice in an area which had suffered from a previously ad hoc and erratic procedure with the subsequent stigma of low-level work.

Sharing Skills

The 1980's saw the teaching of students with special needs recognised as exacting and complex work, requiring elaborate assessment procedures. In the impetus to provide guidelines for staff in mainstream further education, insensitivity was to create the loss of confidence and insecurity which had been experienced in special schools threatened with change. Many staff in ATCs, for example, had been working there for years, on lower pay and for longer hours than teachers in schools. They had developed a pattern of care, training and routine which they felt was appropriate to their client group. When Learning for Independence was published, and when certified teachers, instead of social service instructors began to infiltrate the ATCs, the insinuation was that all the work which had been developed over years was of inferior quality to what was being proposed. Inexperienced teachers, who would be on shorter hours and higher rates of pay, were to initiate the new improved curriculum content. Booth (1983) acknowledged the distress and anxiety which many teachers in special schools felt when they saw integration into mainstream as a direct attack on their professional competence. Hancock (1986) regards the clumsy transfer of resources across into mainstream as a blow to the confidence of experienced practitioners. It was surely to the long-term benefit of groups such as the ATC instructors to enter into consultation and co-operation rather than have them feel threatened by imposed change.

Disseminating Ideas

1985 marked the national launch of the FEU/DES staff development package, From Coping to Confidence . Considerable time, energy and finance was invested in this process, HMIs spending two days with regional groups of lecturers, careers officers, assistant education officers and advisers to ensure that the substance of the pack was as widely absorbed as possible. The pack represented the culmination of Bradley's extensive research in this field, from the 1981 publication onwards. In it, she was joined by experienced and skilled practitioners in the area, like Dee and Hutchinson, and the result is a clearly presented, essentially practical and accessible text, accompanied by a descriptive video. The audience is expected to be as wide as possible, and to include many mainstream lecturers who are new to this area of work. In Setting the Scene Bradley and Dee help to dispel a stereotyped image of moderate learning difficulties and to enable mainstream staff to see examples of such students among those already attending their classes. Bradley employs the model offered in 1978 by Green and McGinty to illustrate the effectiveness of an integrated approach in developing the curriculum. Hutchinson elaborates upon the recommendations of the 1981 report in describing his approaches to Co-operation and Co-ordination .

The value of From Coping to Confidence is that it draws upon all those areas already established as being of critical significance and expands upon them without recourse to jargon or specialist technicalities which would lose them the wider audience they seek. What it lacks, in this process, are the nuances and imaginative invention which mark much work in this area. The pack only purports to offer examples of practice and,

whilst acknowledging that this includes much good practice, it also includes some pedestrian work. If it is used exclusively as a guide, rather than a directive, it is to be welcomed. However when mainstream lecturers, new to these students, refer to the pack for support I would hope they seek supplementary advice, they may use this as a closed text rather than an opening to new ideas.

Extending Understanding

A College Guide: Meeting Special Educational Needs (Cooper, 1986) is a valuable support to a whole-college policy on integration. It focuses upon the student themselves, rather than upon the curriculum process, and explains the complexities of different handicaps, using case studies to break stereotyped images. I regard this publication as reflecting the enhanced confidence in the area of special provision in further education. There is no longer a need to justify the inclusion of students with special needs: they are the responsibility of the college community and this guide addresses itself to all members of that body. There is no longer any excuse for offering ignorance of needs as a justification for exclusion.

The emphasis in the 1986 publications was on improving the quality of provision rather than developing the quality. A two part report from Coombe Lodge, the Staff Training Centre for the Further Education Unit, called Provision for Students with Special Needs , (1986) included papers on Developing a comprehensive LEA policy , A management view of special needs developments , CPVE and students with severe and moderate learning difficulties and Young disabled people and two-year YTS . It recognises the responsibility of management in implementing a policy which will change attitudes, deliver

resources and develop curriculum. Extending general awareness of disability within the community, and throughout educational institutions, has been one of the aims of the Community Service Volunteers, who published In Our Own Right: Beyond the Label of Physical Disability , in 1986. The aim of this pack is to challenge labels and stereotypes, allowing the voices of the disabled contributors to be heard.

It is within this context that the project at Fraser College will be examined. In contrast with other research initiatives, the case study offers an inadequate model of dispelling stereotypes, of creating a management policy for change, of developing staff training and of providing resources to facilitate curriculum expansion. Research projects generally select examples of innovative practice, well supported and established, in order to substantiate their theories. Unlike colleges such as North Nottinghamshire, Southwark, Brixton and Millbank, Liverpool, Fraser College is representative of a college which lacked commitment to the special needs area and which appeared minimally affected by national developments. Spencer College, on the other hand, was to prove an innovative and exciting pioneer in the policy for change which was being advocated nationally. In examining these specific colleges, in their local context, I will illustrate the practical problems and daily experiences of working within a pioneering venture in the early 1980s. Whilst I was influenced by research documents during this period, my attempts to implement the initiatives proposed by them were thwarted by the overwhelming barrier of institutional and borough apathy. This insuperable obstacle is rarely the substance of research documents; yet, so impending are its effects, that curriculum initiatives are paralysed without policy.

Chapter 7

ASSIMILATING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

In Chapter Seven, I look at the original model of integration in further education which is that of the assimilation of students onto existing courses, if they are appropriately qualified and can cope with physical access. Such assimilation has generally been confined to a few sensorily or physically handicapped students, reflecting the pattern in compulsory education. I examine the historical background in which voluntary organisations ran Specialist colleges which catered for students with specific difficulties, like cerebral palsy and additional learning problems. Assimilation, in further education as in compulsory education, involves a selective process in which the most able students with disabilities were absorbed into course provision, as being examples of primary physical handicaps with no intellectual impairment.

I examine research findings which imply that many students with physical handicaps have additional learning difficulties and have needs for which assimilation without curriculum modification is inappropriate. The lack of provision nationally is examined in the light to uncoordinated L.E.A. policy planning and the powerless status of minority groups is illustrated again: this time in relation to further education. A need for flexibility and diversity in course provision is seen as more important than the prevalent focus on physical access - ramps, lifts and special toilets - above all else.

Young people with physical and sensory disabilities have been the pioneers of integration in further education, just as they have in compulsory education. Most long-established technical colleges will have staff who recall an individual with some sensory or physical handicap who attended a course in the

past. As long as the student concerned could cope with the physical limitations of the building and could participate in the course syllabus, they were included in the group. From these isolated individuals who applied personally for admission, there developed formal integration schemes, where links with local special schools led to improved facilities. As in school integration schemes, these categories were selected because they were considered the special needs group who could most easily assimilate into existing curriculum provision. However this assumption denies the complexities of many physical and sensory handicaps and the operation of a selective procedure in which individuals are blamed for deficiencies in the system. This mitigates against integration and is reflected in there being a lower proportion of students with physical disabilities in further education than that of other students with different special educational needs (Fish, 1985, Table 10.4, p.105, Table I).

Table I

Destinations by type of school in 1984

Destination	Type of School/percentages						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Day	0.5	31.1	0	2.9	0	8.2	0
Residential care	0.5	1.1	1.4	2.1	0	8.2	0
ILEA FE	35.6	56.7	17.4	26.4	16.4	14.3	50.0
Non ILEA FE	1.1	0	1.4	4.3	34.3	16.3	0
YTS	17.0	0	18.8	15.0	9.0	0	0
Sheltered Employment	0.8	0	0	1.4	2.9	0	0
Open Employment	11.0	0	15.9	19.2	2.9	0	8.3
Unemployed	9.2	2.2	23.2	10.0	2.9	2.0	8.3
Remained in school	9.0	8.9	7.2	5.0	20.9	40.8	2.5
Other	1.4	0	1.4	2.1	10.5	8.2	8.3
Not Known	13.8	0	13.0	11.4	0	2.0	0

1 Moderate Learning Difficulties

2 Severe Learning Difficulties

3 Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

4 Delicate

5 Visual Impairment

6 Motor Impairment

7 Hearing Impairment
(Fish, 1985, Table 10.4, p.105)

Historical Progression

The history of special education in the post-16 area is not dissimilar to that in the pre-16 stage. Special colleges were established for specific categories of special need, like blind, deaf, severely mentally handicapped or physically handicapped young people. Where these differed from most special schools was that they were always residential, because they offered training

in independence, social and life skills and further general education. The residential experience was often the first time that extremely dependent young people had been away from parental care, and thus it was regarded as an essential component of training for independence. Many were run by voluntary societies like the Spastics Society, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, and the Children's Society. Whilst LEAs offered state special education, parental pressure had often led to the establishment of residential colleges when local post-16 facilities had been inadequate or unsuitable. However, although these special colleges have provided a vital service and pioneered post-16 curriculum provision for these students, they only involved a small proportion of young people compared to the provision potentially available in local further education (Bradley & Hegarty, 1982). As they exist for people with complex needs, special colleges can only cater for a small student population - often no more than fifty students. Reflecting developments in pre-16 educational provision, special colleges are now catering for students with more complex special educational needs (Kent, 1986).

Just as the process of assimilation has selected the academically able from the special school sector, leaving behind an increasingly segregated minority, so the mainstream colleges of further education have taken the most capable students with sensory or physical handicaps, leaving the more severely handicapped in special colleges. Yet special colleges should have innovative roles to play within curriculum development in mainstream further education. As special schools are moving towards a new role as resource centres for mainstream, so special colleges can similarly serve further education, for

> ..they have assumed a wealth of experience and expertise and could act as a valuable resource for maintained colleges which are increasingly being encouraged to open their doors to young people with special needs..
> (Bradley & Hegarty, 1982, p.41)

Learning to use this resource most effectively is a challenge to further education, where local day colleges have traditionally ignored residential special colleges.

The Selection Procedure

Selecting young people with physical or sensory handicaps for integration because they were regarded as having an able mind in a disabled body was not only a crude evaluation of need but it served to perpetuate damaging misconceptions. When Anderson and Clarke examined the special educational needs of adolescents with physical handicaps they recorded the changing nature of disabilities and the failure of educational institutions to acknowledge this change:

> ..we are no longer dealing, as in earlier days when conditions such as poliomyelitis were the most common cause of handicap, with young people whose main problem is a simple locomotor dysfunction and whose intellectual abilities are normal. Although this fact has been recognised in the literature and in government documents for some years, it is clear that the school and post-school services are not yet organised in ways which focus on this reality, accepting it as a central and continuing trend, with the clear implication that open employment will not be available for the majority of school leavers; nor that social outlets will be readily accessible without special intervention of some kind..
> (Anderson & Clarke, 1982, p.342).

Anderson and Clarke were not the first to emphasise the different educational implications of, on the one hand, polio or muscular dystrophy, and, on the other, cerebral palsy or spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Reynell stated that the

> ..manipulation of the environment, such as the provision of mechanical aids, may be enough to allow children without brain involvement to learn normally, but children with cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus will probably need more help, such as special teaching methods geared to their particular level and range of handicap..
> (Reynell, 1974, from Mittler, p.444, table 2).

The term brain involvement describes the impact of a congenital disability which involves associated damage to the brain structure causing learning problems like poor sequential memory, unreliable short-term memory, spatial and perceptual difficulties and lack of concentration which combine to make the process of learning new skills more difficult than usual. Anderson & Clarke found that, not only did young people with cerebral palsy or spina bifida and hydrocephalus have more problems with academic work than their peers, but they had problems in peer group relationships,

> ..and a higher incidence of behavioural and emotional problems than do, for example, children with physical disorders which do not involve the brain..
> (Anderson & Clarke, 1982, p.171)

In 1982, 56% of a sample of young people with these complex disabilities left special school with no qualifications (Table 3). In 1986, many schools for young people with physical handicaps have turned towards alternative curriculum approaches, rather than offer examination failure. Hillcroft School, the special school for young people with physical disabilities which is discussed in the case study, is such an example. Here curriculum innovation has included the exchange of an examination syllabus for a social and life skills profiling system, to prepare the students for life in the community and in the day centre. A link with Milton Road Day Centre, discussed in the case study, is a central feature of the School Leavers Programme.

Table 2

Children with physical handicaps. Joan Reynell. (from The Psychological Assessment of Mental and Physical Handicap edited by Peter Mittler). 1970 (1974) p.444.

Assessment of Children

Handicap	Brain involvement	Type	Unimpaired learning experience	Intellectual learning disorder	Extent of handicap	Remedial measures
Cerebral Palsy	yes	congenital	usually none	primary	multiple	aids & special teaching
Spina Bifida with associated hydrocephalus	yes	congenital	usually none	primary	multiple	aids & special teaching
limb deficiency	no	congenital	usually none	none or secondary	usually confined to physical disability	aids & special teaching
poliomyelitis	no	acquired	usually some, often much	none or secondary	usually confined to physical disability	aids
muscular dystrophy	no	acquired	usually some, often much	none or secondary	usually confined to physical disability	aids

Factors involved in different types of physical handicap

Manipulation of the environment, such as the provision of mechanical aids, may be enough to allow children without brain involvement to learn normally, but children with cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus will probably need more help, such as special teaching methods geared to their particular level and range of handicap.

Table 2 also shows the distinction between handicaps which are congenital and those which are acquired. Children with acquired handicaps have had some unimpaired learning in the early years, which gives them an enormous advantage over those with congenital abnormalities who have never known normal learning experience. Conditions involving abnormal brain function are usually congenital, such as the cerebral palsies, and spina bifida with associated hydrocephalus.

Table 3

SUMMARY OF FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS ON LEAVING SCHOOL

	Group from ordinary schools N (%)	Group from special schools N (%)	Total % N (%)
None	2 (17)	22 (56)	24 (47)
1-3 CSEs	4 (33)	11 (28)	15 (24)
4 or more CSEs and/or 1-3 O levels	4 (33)	5 (13)	9 (18)
One or more A levels	1 (8)	0 (0)	1 (2)
Other	1 (8)	1 (3)	2 (4)

(from Disability in Adolescence. E. Anderson & L. Clarke p.180. 1982).

N.B. 56% of those from the special school have no qualifications 84% have none or 1-3 CSEs: this indicates the impact of complex handicaps upon academic attainment.

Yet despite evidence to the contrary, the notion persists that assimilation is always the most appropriate method of integrating students with physical and sensory handicaps. Whilst recognising that there will always be some academically able students with physical or sensory disabilities who can be seen to succeed within the system as it exists, those who fail because of inappropriate curriculum content and inadequate pastoral support should not be conveniently blamed for their inadequacies (Oliver, 1986). This rigid labelling has denied the opportunity of an appropriate curriculum for those students who might benefit. Those features which I have just described as characteristic of many young people with complex disabilities - learning problems and emotional immaturity - are also familiar characteristics of students with moderate learning difficulties. Curriculum provision appropriate for the latter group will also serve the

needs of the former. Yet, as long as labelling creates a false impression of intellectual potential, some young people will reject such provision as unsuitable.

Irregular Policy

A lack of LEA and national policy is reflected in integration in further education, as it is in the school sector. Again, it is the individual enthusiasms of people in positions of authority which initiated developments. The Work Orientation Unit at North Nottinghamshire College, was the brain-child of the principal when it began on a pilot basis in 1969; another principal became the co-ordinator for handicapped students; a vice-principal in one college submitted a proposal to the LEA for a course for students with physical and intellectual disabilities; a head of department, who had a son with a physical handicap, influenced the policy and practice of his college (Panckhurst, 1980). Despite the evident commitment of influential individuals, such a development loses long-term effectiveness as it lacks coherence where

> ..no college appeared to see itself yet as part of a fully co-ordinated regional plan..
> (Panckhurst, 1980, p.85)

The lack of co-ordinated regional planning led to the casual, fortuitous development of provisions, reflected in Table 4.

Integration evolved more from expedience than commitment. When some colleges of further education found that local industries, like mining for example, were contracting or closing, they were faced with spare accommodation and under-employed staff. They approached advisers who told them of the need for further education course provision for students with a wide range of special educational needs. As the irregular pattern on Table 4 indicates, these opportunities developed gradually in a disjointed process and not as a coherent policy.

Table 4

A Familiar Historical Model of Special Needs Provision in Further Education for Students with Moderate/Severe Learning Difficulties.

TRIST	Some staff development	Some integration
MSC approaches	Bridging courses	Offers of servicing
Approaches to special schools	Link courses	governors get to hear
Slack timetables	approaches to ATCs	spare accommodation
diminishing classes	advisers approached	
falling rolls	reduction of off-the-job training (eg. mining).	

J. McGinty HMI & J. Beazley-Richards (Nov. 1985) National Bureau for Handicapped Students Annual Conference, Blackpool.

Such development also creates inequalities, as provision in further education colleges will vary according to location and not needs. Some students with physical disabilities might be fortunate enough to live near a college like North Notts. which offers both curriculum and physical access. Others might find no comparable provision within a wide radius of their home, and perhaps be forced to go away to a residential college, whether they wish to or not.

A Powerless Minority

This irregular provision reflects the minimal political power of people with disabilities, who are expected to accept their lot. If all school-leavers had to select their further and

higher education choices on the basis of physical access because all public buildings were designed exclusively for wheelchairs, and only a few were adapted for the able-bodied, there would be a public outcry and the government would have to intervene. Yet, unless Finkelstein's fable becomes reality, the present apathy will continue, as this is a powerless minority. Such situations reflect the general inertia of British legislation. By contrast, legislation in the USA has ensured access to further education as Schwartz describes in this comparison made during her scholarship visit to the UK:

> ..California has over 60,000 students with disabilities in further education colleges and universities..

This was because,

> ..it is illegal to discriminate against college entrants in the United States on the grounds of disability..

She was shocked to discover in Britain that discrimination was built into the system,

> ..when a student with a mobility impairment applies to this University admission depends on whether or not the courses he or she wants are conducted in rooms that are accessible..
> (Schwarz, 1983, p.20)

On my recent scholarship visit to the USA I observed that Harvard University had to accommodate students with disabilities, and catered for a wide range of students with special needs, including those with learning difficulties and needing remedial support. I could not envisage Oxbridge, a comparable British institution, being similarly accessible.

Physical access is but the first hurdle in gaining entry to further education in Britain, as Hirst discovered when examining the post-16 educational opportunities for young people with physical disabilities:

> ..those young people who were only physically or sensorily impaired were more likely to have left school at sixteen and taken up further education and less

likely to be still at school..

In contrast, he found that,

> ..those who were multiply impaired were much more likely to have stayed on at school after sixteen..and much less likely to have taken up further education after leaving school..
> (Hirst, 1984, p.37, table 5).

Table 5

from Education after 16 for young people with Disabilities , by Michael Hirst. (Youth and Policy Vol. 2 no. 4. Spring 1984 p.37-39).

Post 16 Education

Post 16 education +	Frequency	Percentage
Still at school	167	20
Left school at 16, received FE	198	23
Left school at 17 or over, received FE	102	12
Left school at 17 or over, received no FE	114	13
Left school at 16, received no FE	264	100
Total (58 cases missing)	845	100

+ excludes those who received no schooling (3) and those who left school before 15 (28), i.e. n=903

The selection process in operation here indicates that only the intellectually unimpaired are included in further education, where access is available, whilst the multiply handicapped have to remain in a school-leavers social skills programme in special school simply because there is no alternative. Hirst's findings support those of Anderson and Clarke in acknowledging that many young people are deprived on two counts. They are rejected both from assimilation into mainstream curricula and from inclusion on special courses for students with moderate learning difficulties. In the early 1980s I visited several colleges which purported to include students with disabilities in their student group on a

course for those with moderate learning difficulties. I found that none of the colleges visited could accommodate students in wheelchairs and that conditions such as asthma, epilepsy or kidney failure were considered disabilities whether they had a debilitating effect upon student performance or not. Inadequacies of old buildings meant that the criteria for admission was not suitability for the course provision but if the student could cope with steep stairs or not. The degree of choice for students in wheelchairs is still severely restricted. I found that students from all over London were asking to come to Fraser College, simply because the building offered physical access for wheelchairs, regardless of the suitability of course provision.

Distorting Priorities

Most school-leavers and their parents would consider that an educational system which placed greater priority on the toilet and environmental factors than the curriculum and syllabus was absurd as such mundane matters bear no relation to educational issues. Yet students with physical handicaps, especially if they are in wheelchairs, will find that these trivial issues take precedence over all else when they seek admission. Not only does this focus on problems emphasise the disadvantaged status of students with disabilities but it distorts what should be an educational decision. Panckhurst offers insight into the reason for this distortion:

> ..seventeen colleges had adapted toilets suitable for physically handicapped students. They were not always regarded as adequate but, like ramps, were a concrete task that a committee could see as a self-evident need and a practical thing to do..
> (Panckhurst, 1980, p.91)

Although this emphasis upon practical tasks, with its problem focus, serves to perpetuate the deficit theory , it does offer

the comfort of being seen to act positively. I am inclined to consider this procedure as more for the benefit of the perpetrators than the recipients as facilities designed for the disabled in general disregard the varying needs of people who will use them. Adapting toilets and building ramps is an easy response as it offers no threat to the established system and promotes no change of policy. Where an individual with mobility problems may really want one-to-one support in class, with an adapted teaching method to suit the rate at which she/he can work the focus is upon the problem of disability rather than the rigidity of the educational system itself.

It surely reflects the impotence of research to influence practice when this narrow focus upon facilities persists after Hegarty and Pocklington's nationally-publicised findings. They clearly warned against such an emphasis, placing the implications of accommodation and resources as secondary to the quality of educational provision (Hegarty & Pocklington, 1981). They recorded a number of common mistakes in integration schemes: students being placed before facilities were ready; staff uninformed before the event; the nature, status and place within LEA policy of a scheme remaining unclear and LEA support failing to be maintained. Lack of national policy diffuses the value of practitioner-research and leads to the duplication of weaknesses and errors. Such mistakes were recorded in primary and secondary schools examined by Hegarty and Pocklington. Sutton cites an example of these very mistakes recurring in further education, five years on from Hegarty and Pocklington...

> ..two profoundly deaf boys were keen to work in the construction industry as qualified craftsmen. After an initial period the college concerned refused them places on grounds of safety but, as a result of publicity and politicians' lobbying, the college staff were forced to reverse this decision. As a teacher of the deaf with no knowledge of building work, I was sent

> from a school for the deaf into this seemingly hostile college to support the two boys. My first priority was to discover the cause of the hostility and try to overcome it. The lecturers seemed reasonable people and had initially been keen to help, but they had not realised that profound congenital deafness usually results in low attainment levels in literacy and numeracy. They thought they had been given an impossible task; they felt inadequate as teachers and they needed help. They also had a fear of the unknown.. (Sutton, 1986, p.546).

This example accurately reflects my own experience. Staff were misinformed, with the numeracy and literacy difficulties of the student being overlooked. The need for a sharing of specialist skills had not been considered at the initial stage, and it was not until political action had occurred that the situation was resolved. What this lecturer regarded as vital for sustaining an integration scheme in further education was a corporate teamwork approach, coupled with liaison with outside agencies.

Opening Access

When Fackley carried out a survey in 1985, asking people with disabilities what they needed in further education, they overwhelmingly answered flexibility . Within the framework of a traditional technical college, where resistance to change might be expected, Fackley suggested that flexibility could be developed:

> ..through diagnosing the needs and problems of students; identifying the people involved in the change; identifying what needs changing; developing strategies and plans; implementing the plans and evaluating the results.
> (Fackley, 1985, p.93)

Such a challenge to the established framework is unsettling and threatening for many staff, however, and Fackley describes the resultant anxiety and hostility as restraining forces which require transformation (p.95). Yet, the experience in the USA gives cause for optimism:

> ..When anti-discrimination legislation became effective in the United States ten years ago, instructors and administrators were extremely sceptical...but, because there was no alternative, no way out, energy soon turned

> from negative it can't be done thinking to positive what do we do first thinking...slowly, with support from special educators the process began, not without problems, but eventually with great success...(Schwartz, 1983, p.20).

The no alternative situation is the only one which will enforce a change in attitude - choice can mean choosing complacency.

As students with physical and sensory disabilities were pioneers in the integration movement in further education, it might be anticipated that they would be major participants in current provision. However, as Table I illustrates, whilst hearing impaired students are well represented, visually impaired and physically handicapped students are severely under-represented. The Fish Report indicated the possible reasons for ILEAs inconsistency,

> ..This is partly a reflection of access to buildings but much can be done imaginatively and at relatively little cost if the will is there. None of the current methods of dealing with this problem (Non-ILEA placement in special colleges, or a designated ILEA college in each sector, or remaining in the special school until 19) fits in with the principles outlined in this report and there this matter needs to be given systematic attention rather than an ad hoc policy being allowed to develop.. (The Fish Report, 1985, p.106).

The omission of a significant proportion of young people with physical disabilities from further education provision is a grave injustice. Many could benefit from the innovative courses now available for young people with moderate learning difficulties. Anderson and Clarke (1982) suggested that adolescents with cerebral palsy or spina bifida and hydrocephalus formed around two-thirds of the population in special schools for the physically handicapped. Most of these students need a modified teaching programme, such as is available in special courses in many colleges. Until Britain decides that there is no alternative this powerless minority will continue to be severely neglected.

Chapter 8

CREATING A CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

When assimilation is inappropriate for students coming from schools for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties, special courses have been provided in colleges of further education. Chapter eight examines developments through the 1980s when a specialist curriculum was introduced and special needs tutors brought into colleges, largely from the special school sector. I discuss the role of the special needs tutor and the importance of a whole-college policy on special needs and integration . The focus is on staff development, curriculum design, student assessment and student-centred learning. An example of flexible course provision is examined and assessed. I illustrate the impact of curriculum development on Social Education Centres and in adult education and suggest that a process of selection and rejection persists, despite curriculum innovation.

A clear and unambiguous college policy on special needs opens the door to curriculum initiatives and staff development. The principal of North Notts. College was committed to providing for young people with special needs. Having researched into community needs, he ensured that the students had access both to the buildings and the curriculum and developed a systematic staff training programme to accommodate the growing numbers (Table 6). The college prospectus states that,

> ..neither the type of handicap nor its severity will be a barrier to entry, and applicants are welcomed from handicapped people of all ages..
> (Work Orientation Unit Prospectus, 1981).

Tile Hill College, in Coventry, is an example of a college which has developed a policy which accommodates student with physical

disabilities coming from the adjacent special college, Hereward College, as well as responding to local need by providing classes for students with severe learning difficulties from the Employment Rehabilitation Centre and the Adult Training Centre, both less than half a mile from the College. It works co-operatively with Hereward College to run a joint BEC National Diploma course. The draft special needs policy offers an open approach to integration with the community,

> ..to ensure that special needs students have ready access to appropriate education courses and provision; take into account the particular needs of these groups when providing services..ensure the integration of special needs students into the community as a whole..
> (Dr. Avery, Principal, 1986, p.486)

The significance of college policy on special needs is that it provides a written commitment to resource and sustain provision. It must be adhered to, despite change of senior management, which enables long-term planning to take place, in the knowledge that this provision is permanent and not experimental. This is then a critical influence upon curriculum development. New curriculum initiatives are long-term and complex. A secure college policy offers a source of strength, whilst an experimental scheme creates anxiety and frustration. Clear, uncompromising college policy on special needs will affect attitudes among mainstream staff, who might then regard this area as of some value, and not consider it to be nothing to do with them.

The Special Needs Tutor

This development of status, as these examples indicate, can only come from commitment at management level. It is suggested in the Warnock Report that each establishment of further education:

> ..should designate a member of staff as responsible for the welfare of students with special needs in the college and for briefing other members on their special needs..
> (Warnock, 1978, 10.42)

This has generally been provided through the transfer of a member of staff from special school to further education. If the member of staff is then incorporated into the college community through being given teaching and administrative responsibilities outside the special needs area, they can be said to be integrated. All too often, however, such specialists remain confined in one section of one department (Avery, 1986). The transfer from the small, sheltered world of special school to the huge, diverse and exposed world of further education could not be more of a contrast so that without being initiated into the new system, a support lecturer could find themselves overwhelmed. This then places them at a disadvantage if they intend to implement curriculum change, because they have not learnt how to work the system . Further education is a formidable bureaucracy and it takes skill to manipulate the game. If the liaison lecturer remains an outsider, she/he will never be able to make the rules.

The welfare and briefing suggested by Warnock represent only a fraction of the responsibilities undertaken in this role, as these job descriptions indicate:

> ..to liaise with the head of department, the responsible LEA officers, the chief psychologist, heads of feeder schools, the careers service..to play a major role in developing link programmes across the college for mentally handicapped adults and young people..the preparation, organisation and promotion of new and established courses..
> (Corbett, 1986, p.26)

The responsibility of the special needs tutor is to liaise with college management, support staff, relate to outside agencies and parents and provide services to students (Hutchinson, 1985). What has not yet been established is a status commensurate with this degree of responsibility. Special needs support lecturers rarely command more than L11 status, which, in the further education bureaucracy, carries minimal power. Yet they are

pioneers, challenging these often conservative establishments to accept curriculum change.

Whole-College Policy

The liaison role should contribute to a whole-college policy, where special needs commands equal status with all other areas of the curriculum. If the support is a periphery activity, outside the mainstream of the college, it cannot foster change. Integration has to be a whole-college responsibility. Some colleges, like Manchester and Haringey, have induction courses for all staff, ancillary as well as academic. This serves to emphasise a whole-college policy and ensure that misunderstandings should not arise through ignorance of needs. It also avoids the hostilities which develop when staff are not consulted about integration schemes, but have them imposed unexpectedly (Hegarty & Pocklington, 1982). It is an act of positive commitment, which informs the college community that this area of work is important. An experimental integration scheme, kept within one department, can only foster the low status of this work. Special needs support lecturers have generally found that a sharing of teaching experience is more effective than an infusion of specialist advice (Corbett, 1986). One tutor told me that a swop-shop of ideas had developed such that a lecturer servicing a group of students with moderate learning difficulties took away worksheets prepared by the special needs tutor, to use with pre-vocational groups. This indicates the thin line which divides special from mainstream curricula, and illustrates how sharing of expertise is the most fruitful form of integration. Sometimes this sharing can be impractical, however, as when a support lecturer for hearing-impaired students was expected: to advise on MSC courses which

included hearing-impaired students; tutor a specialist course; offer support provision on two other sites where there are both separate classes and students integrating - and all from her L1 status.

Staff Development

Table 6
DEVELOPMENT - Teaching Staff

Year	Students	Special	Technical
1969	4	-	3
1970	10	1	3
1971	43	4	12*
1972**	85	7*	20
1973	85	8	20
1974	111	10	25
1975	117	11	30
1976	132	11	35
1977	159	12	35
1978	146	13	33

* Formal Staff Development ** Formal Organisation Development

Table 1 p.27 Further Education and Training of Handicapped Students - An Integrated Approach at College Level. Norman C. Clegg. from Further Education for Handicapped Students Bolton College of Education (Technical). Bolton 1979.)

Staff development is essential if a specialist is not to be over-burdened and isolated. In 1971 and 1972 North Notts. College saw an influx of students with special needs so staff development for both special and technical staff was increased and formalised (Table 6). As staff development was instigated from the principal it gave both status and interest to this area. It is significant that almost three times as many mainstream as opposed to specialist staff teach these students, reflecting the college and not just specialist responsibility. However, staff attitudes are not always supportive even where there is whole-hearted

commitment from management. Albert Weedall, principal of Bournville College, Birmingham, was eager to develop special provision but whereas staff had been infected by his enthusiasm when they numbered only 45, they included some sceptical members by the time they had grown to over 65 in five years. Their fears were that the college was going to become a loonies' college , over-identified with handicap. Some staff expressed anxiety over fire regulations for students in wheelchairs. NATFHE reported that severely that severely physically handicapped male students, who needed intimate assistance with toileting, had no welfare support and were dependent upon staff sympathy, in assisting at break and lunch times. Staff complained that they had to teach students who smelled unpleasant, usually students with spina bifida, who were in need of personal care and training. Others suggested, with no proof, that all vandalism in the college was the responsibility of students with moderate and severe learning difficulties (Twyman, 1986).

Equal Opportunities

The Principal maintained his equal opportunities stance, supported by both LEA and senior management. Despite their reservations, staff had to co-operate: they had no choice. What did develop, however, as a result of the college's long-term commitment and evident staff disquiet, was a complex staff development strategy, which applied to Health and Safety Committee, college canteen, college library, building services, academic board, as well as curricular needs and mainstream classes. What is of particular interest is the in-service training on The Law and Disabled/Special Needs Students in FE , and the emphasis which the current principal gives to changing staff attitudes (Twyman, 1986). Schwartz (1983) reflected that

staff were sceptical and hostile but, because they had to comply, they learnt to cope. The philosophy of this college has created a climate where staff are offered no choice but to comply: the principal had a belief in FE for all . As change is difficult, staff were supported by training and policy strategies through which attitudes were modified by a process of confidence-building, the training in legislation being a significant tactic. Yet, as there is no national policy on integration, this college was stigmatised as a special needs provision, which makes it all the more difficult to sustain positive staff development.

Within the best colleges, a curriculum evolved which ceased to blame the student for her or his inadequacies. The student is the focus for the curriculum: she/he does not have to measure up to it; it has to adapt to suit her or his needs. Thus curriculum implementation includes:

> ..collecting feedback from evaluation techniques; checking progress against aims and objectives; modifying the design in the light of experience and progress. In providing for special needs students continual attention must be given to individual students' developing potential or difficulties. Modification in these circumstances is to be encouraged, but always needs to be checked against course objectives..
> (Drysdale, 1986, p.495).

Whilst this degree of flexibility appears essential in theory, its viability needs to be assessed in practice. In a national survey it was recorded that over 80% of students with moderate learning difficulties were being accommodated in courses which had an established structure but in which staff would modify this to meet student needs (Norwich, 1983). The following example illustrates the flexibility required to run such a course.

Course Structure

At South East London College a course called Gems was established in 1981:

..in response to an identified need for some provision

> for socially isolated students with moderate learning difficulties..
> (Major, 1986, p.6)

This course was to cater for those individuals who had already attended a special course but needed more structure in Living Skills , and for older students who had never received further education - neither group being the typical school-leaver:

> ..the selection criteria for the course are very loose with each referee being allowed to self-select (their term) to join the course or not..the programme is divided into core areas and electives: Core - literacy/numeracy, sport, health, multi-skills, computer literacy (segregated GEMS group sessions); Electives - pottery, art, music, dance, drama (all integrated sessions, selected by individual students)..
> (Major, 1986, p.7)

Major suggest that South East London College was able to offer this degree of flexibility because it was very large, and covered such diverse provision, so that integrating into almost tailor-made courses is possible. He does, however, recognise the complexities which accompany this ease of curriculum access and flexible programme.

In theory, a course like GEMS would appear to offer such remarkable flexibility to students with a diverse range of special needs that they could not but benefit. In practice, that very flexibility created problems as the students could not cope with choice. The numbers referred to the course were high, but soon dwindled as few students decided the course was what they wanted, and most were referred elsewhere. Major concluded that:

> ..to start a course designed to aid students with decision-making difficulties by asking them to make a major decision is self-defeating..(p.9).

The cost of facilitating a roll-on, roll-off provision is that many students miss out on the initial induction and assessment period. The literacy and numeracy needs of the group vary markedly, and floating students who only attend intermittently, because of family difficulties or sporadic hospitalisation, cause

disturbance to the stability of the group. The students, in general, preferred a GEMS only provision in most of their electives, which ran contrary to the integration aspirations of the course team. (Major, 1986). Major's observations established the difficulties encountered when implementing courses which require this degree of flexibility, yet Fackley's 1985 survey revealed that the majority of people with physical disabilities in her sample regarded flexibility as the keynote to successful integration. Flexibility is essential for mature students who will not fit into easy categories. What these complexities underline is that integration is not easy. It is a complex, laborious operation, fraught with problems. Yet integration is an artifice if it ignores these problems: they must be addressed in order to respond with appropriate modifications. The complexities need to be recognised as an inevitable consequence of developing new channels to enhance the participation of a hitherto excluded group.

Assessment Procedures

Through listening to their students, staff can learn to look critically at their methods of assessment. In the GEMS Course, students were assessed through RSA Profiling but,

> ..all students agreed that the RSA skills record sheet didn't make sense to them. They didn't understand the vocabulary or what skills were meant by the sheet, and they didn't fully understand what RSA was.. Communications was not a word easily understood..(Students' Evaluation of the GEMS 1 Course, 1984-1985, p.2).

Staff can encourage their students to express opinions and make suggestions. This is an integral component of the profiling system assessment, where students are involved in setting their own goals and deciding when or if they have achieved them. It is also being developed in the process of self-advocacy, currently gaining favour in adult training or social education centres

where members are generally unused to voicing their opinions. In a televised conversation called Finding a Voice , several members of an adult training centre were encouraged to discuss issues such as living independently , going out at night and employment outside the centre (Open University, 1986). They were treated as adults despite difficulties in articulating their ideas. What was made apparent was the importance of listening to and not speaking for people.

Learning for Independence

The system should fit around the individual. This is the ethos of Skelton Adult Training Centre in Cleveland where the traditional industrial workshop routine was never established, and members can choose to go shopping or to the sports centre, using public transport where possible (Semp, 1983). It has to be recognised that such a flexible and community-related attitude can more easily be established from a new institution, which can create its own ethos, than a long-established one, with a predictable pattern, and Skelton Centre was only opened in 1979. A curriculum in further education can involve community participation by bringing the community in. At Skelton Centre, local people came in informally to buy craft goods and vegetables sold to them by trainees and not staff.

Learning Together

Community participation involves sharing educational provision. The adult education project in Hillingdon and Islington uses volunteers to support students with severe learning difficulties in adult education classes in which

> ..the approach is to respect individuals, and to work with rather than for them..(Billis, 1982, p.16).

This is fostered by working in conjunction with staff and members in day centres and community hostels. The GEMS course responded

to the needs of people in local hostel and centre provision, and worked with their domestic and recreational needs in mind; the mental handicap project in Southwark offers classes in art, yoga, dance, drama, pottery, and various crafts, to local residents, most of whom attend a day centre (Lloyd, 1985).

Rejected Special Needs

Those very groups of children who are continuing to be segregated are among those categories of students with special needs who are denied access to further education curriculum provision. The Fish Report (1985) expresses concern at the small proportion of young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties receiving any form of further education (17.4% ILEA FE; 1.4% non-ILEA FE). Yet ILEA is regarded as a progressive local education authority in Britain. It is the more surprising, therefore, to find that this category is again neglected in Massachusetts, generally considered to be at the forefront of integration in the United States yet

> ..the Massachussetts Advocacy Center's major concern is that some young people, particularly those aged between 18 and 22, are being excluded from education altogether as a disciplinary measure..(Vaughan & Shearer, 1986, p.11).

The inequitable system which operates in compulsory education is perpetuated in further education, in regard to students with behavioural problems. The most profoundly handicapped and seriously disturbed people with learning difficulties are grouped under the category of special care . In post-16 provision they are generally found in day centres or attached to adult training centres in special units. This unit placement can deny them a share in curriculum innovation. In Cleveland, special care members are not segregated in Skelton Centre, but are fully integrated into the community of the centre, a move which is facilitated by close liaison with health service professionals.

These two groups are likely to be excluded because they threaten the status quo . Young people with behavioural problems require counselling and flexible curriculum provision which makes them time-consuming, difficult and unrewarding to teach. The special care section of an adult training centre is impossible to group: they tend to be demanding individuals unable to relate to others, possibly violent and probably incontinent. These two categories represent the unacceptable and thus rejected face of special need.

Chapter 9

INTEGRATION IN THE YOUTH TRAINING SCHEME

In this chapter, I examine the attitude of the Manpower Service Commission towards trainees with special educational needs in the Youth Training Scheme. This attitude is expressed in a system of training for unemployment and in a lack of flexibility and understanding of individual needs. A selective system, which appears to characterise integration , operates within different Youth Training Schemes. The combination of unstatemented low-achievers from comprehensives and statemented trainees from special schools is seen to be creating complex difficulties.

The Manpower Service Commission (MSC) have moved from a concept of disability in 1983 of

> ..young disabled people defined as those who suffer from a recognised mental, physical or sensory handicap..

to a broader post-Warnock definition of

> ..those who suffer from a physical, mental or sensory handicap, and/or who have moderate to severe learning difficulties..(ICO/RADAR survey, 1986, p.7)

However, recent research suggests that this new definition is still not as broad as that used in schools and further education:

> ..the MSC definition often excludes those young people who have some learning difficulties, or who have emotional/behavioural problems. The narrower MSC definition prevents the above young people from benefitting from support, extensions etc. which they need..(ICO/RADAR Survey, 1986, p.8).

I find it a paradox that, although this definition excludes these young people, they account for the highest proportion of trainees with special educational needs within the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) (Lazarus & Allen, 1984; Fish, 1985). It implies that the MSC is retaining an out-dated notion of special need and that

> ..the Area Boards should adopt a policy which gets away from the wheelchair syndrome and the simplistic use of the term disabled"..(ICO/RADAR, p.8).

Perhaps the MSC fosters this emphasis because it wishes to avoid confronting the challenge of the more uncomfortable type of special need .

The problem of youth unemployment cannot be avoided and has only grown worse, less than 3 out of 10 trainees finding jobs after YOPS in 1982 (Finn, 1984). Whilst the figures from the ICO/RADAR Survey show 29.7% of the sample of young people with special needs entering open employment after YTS, they also show 36.9% with no immediated prospects of employment. Yet YTS was a direct response to youth unemployment as the MSC had to be seen to be doing something positive (Ball, 1983). When unemployment generally is so high, those with special educational needs are inevitably at a disadvantage:

> ..YTS is currently accepting young people whose employment prospects in the present economic situation are very questionable..(ICO/RADAR, p.7).

If young people with behavioural problems and learning difficulties are not recognised no provision is made for them and they can sink or swim, for

> ..the emotionally/behaviourally disturbed..do not form a homogenous group and consequently it is not possible to design specific courses for them. The best solution would be for MSC to finance peripatetic support for this group..it will be a challenge to retain the interest and commitment of young people with learning difficulties and emotional/ behavioural problems..(ibid. p.8).

To meet this challenge, a degree of flexibility is essential, but this cannot always be accommodated within the complex structure of YTS Programmes.

Training in Attitudes

The MSC has been preoccupied with the educational and training needs of minority groups for some time before YTS was established, as their 1979 publications indicate. Their 1979 definition of special need was broad:

..for all sorts of reasons, people may lack

> opportunities for developing a sufficient range of skills in their daily lives..among these is the group most at risk, those young people with little prospect of work, people who are physically and mentally handicapped, people with different cultural backgrounds..(MSC, 1979, p.2).

Part of the Training suggested in the 1979 programme was to train young people in Being Unemployed:

> ..to adapt to existing on a limited budget..to anticipate responses of officials..to fill time..(MSC, 1979, p.23).

Moos (1983) regarded similar training in taking orders , making friends and avoiding the sack as an unacceptable form of social control, in which trainees are being programmed to cope rather than to direct their lives. This reinforces the concept that minority groups, forced into the periphery of a capitalist society, assume a dependent status commensurate with their disadvantaged position. It is to their advantage to assimilate into a suitable work mould, as

> ..the young person benefits most who most fits the employer's expectation of a good employee.. (ICO/RADAR, 1986, p.9).

Responding to Needs

69% of careers officers, responding to the ICO/RADAR Survey, believed that:

> ...the YTS was not sufficiently flexible to meet individual needs of young people with special needs. The principal complaint was that young people had to fit the training offered rather than the training being tailored to the needs of the trainees.(ibid, p.9)

This criticism was applied to Mode B Workshops as well as to Mode A Schemes which I found surprising in relation to the high proportion of young people with special needs who attend the former:

> ..Local Mode B training workshops in particular, possibly due to the large number of trainees involved, offer a course of training within which the youngsters must fit, rather than tailoring training to each individual's needs..
> ..Current haste..is leading to a provision-led

response, i.e. this is what we can provide, have you any young people who are suitable? (ibid, p.9)

This 1986 Survey concluded that what it termed genuine integration in YTS could only be achieved by a radical change of attitude in the system, and that an inflexible adherence to established YTS curricula would inhibit integration. Of the 88 Careers Officers who responded to the Survey, only 5 commented on the value of life and social skills training in YTS, and expressed hope that the two-year model lead to an extension of this:

> .. if the YTS becomes too vocational without allowing scope for a young person to develop maturity and social skills, which in the long term improves employability, then the scheme will fail the lower ability young people..(ibid, p.18)

Another advocate for social and life skills takes a more realistic and, some might say, cynical stance:

> ..I would like to see a greater emphasis on the acquisition of life skills - especially important in this area where most young people will leave YTS for unemployment..(ibid,p18)

The last comment reflects the ambivalant role of YTS, especially in relation to young people with special educational needs. Is it to emphasise preparation for work or for unemployment?

> ..Despite many years of unemployment, YTS is still based upon out-dated assumptions, eg. that there is work available. Not enough attention is given to skills that will be required whether inside or outside of paid employment..(ibid,p.18)

Coffield, Borrill & Marshall, (1983), conducting research in the North East of England were critical of the pointless tasks offered in the guise of work as, for example, manually clearing rubbish from a beach, which a machine could complete in a fraction of the time.. A fear, on the part of MSC initiatives, of confronting the reality of unemployment was acknowledged as it had such overwhelming political implications. It was suggested that, should a generation of unemployable youths confront their

fate, this might ignite riot. The correlation between urban street disorder and high youth unemployment, however can be no justification for offering fruitless tasks as the performance of pointless work serves to sustain low status rather than remedy it.

Selection for Training

Mode A YTS has been recognised as being highly selective such that

> ..Managing Agents are reluctant to take young people with special needs into Mode A schemes and show little inclination to canvass their work providers for suitable placements. There is perhaps more sympathy shown towards the young person with a physical or sensory handicap than towards those with learning or behavioural difficulties..(ICO/RADAR, 1986, p.13)

Just as integration schemes in schools placed their most able pupils for assimilation, in order to create a favourable impression, so Mode A selected only the most capable. In order to operate successfully, such a model depends upon sympathetic host institutions, and this applies as much to YTS as to schools:

> ..I am guilty of using only about 5 or 6 tried and tested Managing Agents where I know special needs of young people will get a fair chance, good opportunities and a sympathetic ear..
> ..I suspect that I instinctively do not approach schemes which appear to be more highly selective and rigid..(ibid. p.14)

Not only does this narrow the scope for young people with special needs but it creates the need for a liaison approach to the host institution in order that co-operation is maintained. In this, the specialist careers officer assumes the role of liaison or public relations agent, much as a liaison lecturer operates in a college of further education:

> ..The figures in this report..in no way reflect the amount of persuasion/coercion/pleading/negotiating and even bullying (of sponsors) that is involved both prior to and during the placement on YTS of a trainee with special needs..(ibid. p.14)

Mode B schemes can be seen to practice positive

discrimination in favour of minorities as they are more flexible; devoting time to individual needs; offering curriculum access for those not selected for Mode A; providing a better staff/trainee ratio than Mode A schemes in which staff are better informed about special needs, particularly on specialist courses; and helping to develop social and life skills. Despite their acknowledgement of this positive discrimination several careers officers were critical of the restricted choice, lack of challenge and lowered horizons in some Mode B schemes. This substantiated earlier research by Moos (1983) which suggested that goals in YTS generally were set deliberately low. Staff in colleges of further education are an integral component of the off-the-job training for YTS. Specialist training and support for both YTS and college staff is regarded as essential because

> ..sentiment and goodwill are not a sufficient basis for good practice..(ibid. p.12)

This training includes a sharing of skills which are readily available as

> ..there is an untapped reservoir of expertise in education (special, secondary and tertiary) which might be enlisted (p.12)

Invariably it is trainees with behavioural problems that are the group that has proved most difficult for the colleges to handle.

> Their traditional approach appears ineffective and often alienates the trainees. Colleges have been very unwilling to admit that they have problems in coping with these trainees; will not accept outside help or be prepared to adapt teaching techniques; see YTS as a passing phase or something which they will not have to deal with on a permanent basis..have ideological objections which hinder progress and the acceptance of responsibility..(Lazarus & Allen, 1984, p.10)

Tension is heightened by the separate placement of trainees in YTS workshops into industrial premises, and further education students into college premises. It is like a unit model of integration, with us and them divisions in which responsibility

can be abdicated. Divisions can be reinforced when students are studying for careers, whilst trainees are being trained in developing employable skills. The implications are that integration into YTS is not necessarily advantageous to young people with special needs.

SECTION 3

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDY

Chapter 10

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATION SCHEMES IN THE BOROUGH OF HAREFIELD

This section introduces the borough of Harefield, in which the case study is placed, Fraser College, in which the integration process will be examined, and the developments which had taken place prior to my inclusion in the college community. Whilst this London borough and this technical college are unique in their historical and political development, each geographical area reflecting different perspectives, they also offer valuable examples of a multi-cultural, urban borough and a long-established technical college.

Many of the issues examined in Sections One and Two are illustrated in this section in which I am able to focus, in more detail than before, on a specific Local Education Authority, its policy on integration and the development of integration schemes. Among the issues in Section One which are reflected here are: resistance to change; the selection of certain categories of special need , specifically physically and sensorily handicapped children, for integration and the segregation of others; discrimination against Afro-Caribbean children in special education; lack of clear policy guide-lines; community integration for adults with disabilities and the growth of innovative day centre provision; a pattern of placement in individual integration schemes which precludes the practice of promoting equal opportunities. Issues in Section Two are illustrated in the following ways: Fraser College is the type of institution it is because of its location, history and policy, curriculum initiatives for students with special needs are not reflected in the practice at Fraser College; integration has entailed assimilation of those students who can cope; there has been no attempt to modify the curriculum to suit individual

needs; the process of integration in the Youth Training Scheme has been fraught with the problems of providing appropriate provision and staff training which are national issues (ICO/RADAR, 1986); Mode B workshops experienced particular difficulties in providing adequate support.

Section Three offers an example of integration in practice, with all the complexities which this process entails.

The Borough of Harefield

While the population of Harefield has declined in recent years, there has been considerable migration into the borough. Between 45% and 55% of the population is from ethnic minorities, mainly of Caribbean and Greek or Turkish Cypriot origins, but also with Asian and African backgrounds. An HMI report of 1984 reported higher rates of unemployment than in Greater London as a whole, with the highest rates among the young.

> ..Among those 16-19 year olds not in full-time education, 30% of males and 23% of females have been unemployed for between one and three years..(HMI p.4 July 1984, Appendix E).

Harefield is classed, with three other LEAs (out of a total of 97), as having the highest level of pupils likely to experience difficulties in school as a result of poverty and deprivation (DES, 1982). Yet the borough is divided into contrasting areas of affluence and poverty, resulting in an imbalanced community. Within this context, Fraser College of Technology is sited in the poorest area of Harefield, where young people experience inadequate housing, high levels of unemployment and strained relations with the police. Tuck and Southgate (1981) noted that poor relations with police in deprived urban environments related more to areas of residence than to race. This research is born out in the 1985 experience of riots in Harefield's most notorious tower-block housing estate. Whilst this riot saw violent clashes

between young people from ethnic minorities and the police, it did not reflect the multi-racial community as a whole within the borough, but rather the tensions which the lack of policing, drug-pushing, robbery and lawlessness had created as the estate had fallen further into disarray. Parents on the estate complained that schools in the surrounding area expected lower standards and experienced more problems than in more favoured parts of Harefield. This created a problem for the LEA in finding staff who would accept the challenge to work in them. Some West Indian parents have sent their children to private all-black schools to escape the stigma of being in sink state schools (Baker, 1985).

If further education is to be responsible to its local community and responsive to needs, then Fraser College was placed where it should have offered appropriate provision for young people in a deprived urban environment. Yet it was content to rest within the confines of a comfortable but extremely limited commitment. This complacency was reflected in the restricted borough commitment to developing positive discrimination in its educational policy.

Borough Integration Schemes

Two integration schemes were established in Harefield during the 1970s. One was concerned with the gradual dispersal of children from the school for hearing impaired children into mainstream schools in the borough. Ultimately the school became an administrative centre only, with specialist teachers working with mainstream teachers to support hearing impaired pupils. The primary criterion for placement on the individual integration scheme was that the child was a resident of Harefield, but:

> ..Ideally, of course, the child should also be emotionally stable, of at least average intellectual ability, and have good communication skills, no significant

secondary handicap, an outgoing nature and supportive English speaking parents..(Headteacher, June 1985)

The second integration scheme was concerned with the selected integration of children with physical disabilities into mainstream schools in Harefield. Pupils were chosen from the special school (referred to as Hillcroft in the case study) on the basis of their ability to cope with the demands of mainstream curricula. (Headteacher, July 1978).

It is pertinent to question the rationale for the integration of these specific groups of children with special needs within a borough which has been shown to contain many children with learning difficulties and social disadvantages. This pattern of integration fails to reflect the equal opportunities policy espoused by Harefield council but instead mirrors the national trend, observed by Booth (1983) and Swann (1985), which offers increased opportunities for integration to children with physical and sensory disabilities while maintaining, if not increasing, the segregation of children with behavioural problems and moderate learning difficulties. This pattern created disquiet in Harefield as the inequalities of the educational system led to a high proportion of West Indian children being placed in its special schools for pupils with behavioural problems and moderate learning difficulties. This trend was resisted by protest from the Black Parents' Group (Report, 1980). As in the Boston inner-city areas, parents in Harefield resented their children being segregated into special provision in a system of assessment which appeared to disadvantage them (Budoff, 1975). It was acknowledged in the 1980 Report that once pupils had been placed in these special schools they were very difficult to reintegrate as mainstream schools had often rejected them. In contrast physically and

sensorily handicapped children had been selected for integration because they were seen as easy to assimilate into the existing mainstream curriculum and as acceptable pupils with special needs who would not present problems of disruption or learning disorders.

Integration in Practice

The majority of hearing impaired pupils were placed in three units attached to an infant, a junior and a secondary school. This would constitute locational integration and social participation as the pupils would spend some time in the mainstream school while attending specialist sessions in their separate unit. In June 1985 there were eight pupils from the special school on the individual integration scheme, ranging in age from 9.3 to 16.6 years and in hearing loss from partial to profound deafness. They were supported by a team of four qualified teachers of the deaf and placed in three comprehensive schools and two junior schools in Harefield. The high staff ratio must be measured against the high pupil/teacher ratio within the three units, which is 20 teachers and 3.5 ancillary staff to 53 pupils. The head of the school for hearing impaired children acknowledged that, while it was preferable for pupils to attend their local school and thereby make the usual network of friendships common to most children, a school had to be selected which could be seen to display overall commitment:

> ..It is not enough for the headteacher to be keen on the idea, though this is a pre-requisite for success. It is important for all the staff to be informed of the implications of such a venture and for their opinions to be sought. In-service training of the staff of the school must also be carried out and assurances given by the headteacher that he has suitable, enthusiastic teachers on his staff for the child's year-by-year education in his school..(Headteacher, June 1985)

The complexities of this model of integration are recognised:

> ..Nobody claims that the scheme is appropriate for all

> hearing impaired children, nor that as a means of educating these children it should replace established modes..(Headteacher, June 1985)

While eight hearing impaired pupils experience functional, and therefore, in Warnock's terms, full integration, fifty three are involved in locational and social, and therefore only partial integration, within this model. It was a well resourced and much publicised research project, which illustrated the beneficial effect of integration in improving the verbal and social skills of children with hearing impairment (Dale, 1984).

The school for physically handicapped children established links with a local secondary school when it became apparent that the special school could not cater adequately for the curricular needs of senior pupils;

> ..Handicapped pupils were welcomed into the comprehensive school for single subjects like cookery, art and woodwork..pupils from the comprehensive school spent time in the special school as part of a child-development course and also helped with swimming lessons..
> (Headteacher/AEO Special Needs. Report July 1978)

From these informal early links eight pupils from the special school were selected, as having a handicap which was uncomplicated by a significant degree of intellectual impairment, to be functionally integrated. In 1972-3 this first scheme developed with the local comprehensive and in 1976 a second comprehensive school joined the scheme. Between 1972 and 1978 twenty six pupils from the special school of about one hundred pupils, had been integrated into the two schools. The scheme in the first comprehensive school became unviable and currently integration at secondary level operates in only one comprehensive in Harefield. From September 1980 the scheme has been extended into a local junior and infant school. It was developed on the rationale that some years in mainstream primary education was a more suitable preparation for secondary transfer than the

previous model of transfer from special school to comprehensive at eleven. Until 1985 the emphasis has been upon individual integration placements but, with the increasingly multiply-handicapped pupils remaining in a smaller, segregated community, a new move was developing towards a unit attached to a junior or secondary school for all those pupils remaining in the special school. (Report of Deputy Head, June 1985).

The Placement Model

The integration schemes operating in Harefield displayed all the weaknesses inherent in this model: they depended upon the goodwill of host-institutions; were locked into an assimilation mould which artificially inhibited curriculum development; and were vulnerable to changes in management as they relied so heavily upon the support of headteachers. Both typify the examples illustrated earlier in which the selection of a receptive headteacher in a responsive and stable school is critical to success. As examples of successful integration, both were used for research documents and provided detailed descriptions of good practice (Anderson & Clarke, 1982; Madge & Fassam, 1982; Dale, 1984; Orton, 1986).

Tentative Links

Yet the vulnerability of such an approach to policy is illustrated in the breakdown of the link between Hillcroft Special School and the initial host-school:

> ..the school had an awful lot of social problems..its structure was not well defined, and staff felt that disabled students coming into the school were an additional hassle they had to cope with..
> (Liaison Teacher of 1972-1982, interviewed 1984)

Here had been a situation where the headteacher of the host comprehensive had expressed enthusiasm and had negotiated with the headteacher of Hillcroft but there had been minimal consultation with a staff who were already demoralised through

lack of support with the problems they were facing. Where they felt there was inadequate recognition of existing special needs a climate to foster the inclusion of additional special needs was difficult to create. Despite every effort of the liaison teacher to provide in-service staff support once she was in post, the resistance was impregnable such that,

> ..they never saw them as part of the school..they would always wait till I came in and say, Your kids weren't wearing their ties , or something equally silly..It was impossible to run any staff training because, even when I arranged it in the lunch-hour and offered food, staff still wouldn't come.. (Liaison Teacher of 1972-1982)

The collapse of this scheme illustrates the frailty of establishing a framework which depends upon the elusive and superficial quality of personal relations at management level.

This statement contradicts my suggestion that the selection of a receptive head teacher is crucial to success. Within a placement model it is, for, the guest-host relationship requires a welcoming host .

In contradicting myself, I am not intending to weaken my argument and confuse my reader. Rather, I wish to establish two vital issues: that any policy which has to rely on good-will and charisma is immediately vulnerable to abuse; and that in this contradiction, as in many others, I am only reflecting the practice of integration as I observed it. I found that there were two conflicting sides to many issues - the nature of relationships at administrative level being but one example. The practice of integration, operating in complex and constantly changing circumstances, creates contradictions which I would be dishonest to ignore.

Integration schemes tend to begin with closed meetings between senior administrators. Obviously such negotiation constitutes an element of planning for integration, but without

the foundations of a whole-school approach to special needs, such an initiative will be exposed to malaise and malpractice as soon as it becomes operable and the innocent victims will be the children concerned. When integration becomes a source of conflict between management, in the form of the headteacher and L.E.A., and teachers' unions, then it can be used as a political tool to maintain a fight for power. It is frightening enough for the integrated pupils to be challenged with change without being used as pawns in political conflict. The liaison teacher became so concerned with this problem that she reflected,

> ..I'm not sure we did them any favours by integrating them into that situation as there were so many stresses and difficulties..(Liaison Teacher, 1972-1982)

Her caution reminds us that integration must not be seen as simple placement: if this placement is deeply unsatisfactory, it cannot be regarded as an integrated provision.

Wooing the staff

Newcross (which I will call the successful comprehensive school) has operated for some ten years as a positive example of an integration scheme where staff are enthusiastic, the pastoral system supportive and the ethos one of a whole-school commitment to special needs. Nonetheless, it required delicacy to infiltrate the host establishment:

> ..It was a PR job to bring in an academically able child first as a trial and that wooed the staff into a frame of mind where they said, If there's plenty more like that we'll have them.. (Liaison Teacher, 1972-1982)

This cap-in-hand approach to integration becomes a conspiracy of silence. The staff of Hillcroft knew that there were not many more children like that and that many of their children had learning difficulties, but they feared that too much truth would inhibit the progress of integration. So developments were blurred by an evasion of the acute need for long-term planning

and curriculum change. The liaison teacher knew that,

> ..it needs an additional commitment from the host school to try and integrate them into a viable programme rather than to slip them into whatever is currently on offer.. (Liaison Teacher, 1972-1982)

Table 7
Pupils From Hillcroft Special School Integrated into Newcross Comprehensive School (January 1986)

Year	Disability
1	Duchenne muscular dystrophy Spinal muscular atrophy
2	Thyroid endocrine disorder Spinal muscular atrophy Cerebral palsy and visual handicap Duchenne muscular dystrophy Cerebral palsy
3	Cerebral palsy Cerebral palsy
4	Undiagnosed (to be statemented) Connective tissue disorder Ureterostophy
5	Congenital heart disorder Spina bifida (no hydrocephalus) Cerebral palsy Spina bifida (no hydrocephalus)
6	Cerebral palsy

Table 8
Pupils at Hillcroft Special School: 1985-1986

Age	Number	Handicaps
3-7	8	6 Cerebral palsy 1 Osteogenisis imperfecta 1 ?
7-11	13	8 Cerebral palsy 2 Spina bifida & hydrocephalus 1 Muscular dystrophy 1 Moya moya disease in association with familial neurofibromatosis 1 ?
12-15	13	9 Cerebral palsy 1 Muscular dystrophy 3 Spina bifida & hydrocephalus
15+	9	6 Cerebral palsy 1 Spina bifida & hydrocephalus 1 Arthrogryposis 1 Muscular dystrophy

Selection and Rejection

The process of selection for the scheme created an increasing imbalance for Hillcroft until it had evolved into,

> ..a disastrous effect in some ways. We are losing models..we are losing a certain amount of impetus in the classroom..I'm very concerned about staff morale..the challenge in the classroom that kept the other going has gone..
> ..Pupils who failed to make it knew perfectly well what their position was:
> ..there are two areas which they don't seem to speak much of at all, and one is integration and the other is death, and we have a fair amount of both in this school.. (Swann, 1987, p.207)

The selection process clearly damages the composition of Hillcroft. Of the seventeen pupils who had been integrated into Newcross from Hillcroft only eight had disabilities which might include a degree of learning difficulty (Table 7), whilst thirty five out of the forty one pupils at Hillcroft had complex disabilities (Table 8). By 1986 there were staff at Newcross who were only too aware of the need for modification of the curriculum and an increased level of participation for the pupils being integrated from Hillcroft (Swann, 1987). What was clearly evident was the need for a comprehensive borough policy for the one which existed was reliant on individual initiatives in the past:

> ..But this version of policy did no more than describe the current practice. The vital absence was the lack of any statement of what ought to happen in the future.. (Swann, 1987, p.215)

Swann recognises that Harefield was developing a borough policy through establishing eight working parties which were to produce a grassroots rather than bureaucrats report, but is pessimistic about its impact on a situation which has persisted for so long on such an ad hoc basis.

The scheme which was to be established at Fraser College has to be understood against this background context. It was

modelled on the constricting frameworks which had become successful initiatives within Harefield. I risk being tarred with cynicism by regarding Harefield's well publicised integration schemes as useful diversions from the borough's otherwise glaring inadequacies in terms of educational provision. There is a certain glamour attached to such schemes whereby the goodwill and enthusiasm of the protagonists merits applause: we must be cautious of confusing performance with reality and return the concept of integration to the broader arena of community participation. Whilst these two schemes placed Harefield on the map as a borough which favoured integration, they are not representative of any cohesive special needs policy.

Overall Provision

Isolated and strictly segregated special school provision was to be found in Harefield, especially in one grim location where the school for children with severe learning difficulties and the school for children with moderate learning difficulties were placed next to each other, facing the desolate tower block estate, which was to become famous for its riot. These schools were in a cul-de-sac, next to a primary school but with minimal links with it. The school for children with behavioural problems was in an intensely isolated area, miles away from the part of Harefield where most of the pupils lived, away from shops, schools and public transport. The location of Hillcroft School imposed yet another barrier on the already debilitated community for it was surrounded by factories and isolated from local schools. When teachers in the special schools in Harefield formed a committee to examine Harefield's response to Section 10 of the 1980 Education Act they recorded that provision had been ad hoc and irregular, they expressed concern at the creaming off of the most able pupils in integration schemes, regarded the

integration initiatives within most of the borough's special schools as being inadequate and incompetent and feared that the 1981 Act would see no improvement (Report, 1980). The irregular pattern of post-16 provision reflects the weaknesses created by lack of coherent policy.

Further Education

The 1982 publication of Newton and Robinson's research might lead one to expect that such further education provision was typical of what was general practice, yet there was no post-16 provision for the pupils leaving Harefield's school for children with moderate learning difficulties until an off-site unit in an abandoned secondary school was established, as a pilot project, in September 1982. This was the result of short-term, ill-considered planning and staff were frustrated by having to contend with severely limited resources, inadequate premises and an isolated location which precluded integration into either a peer group or the local community. When Harefield opened their new college of further education, Spencer College, in September 1983, it was evident that one of the major roles of this college would be to provide further education for students with special needs. Yet, as the off-site unit had been established and staffed, it became an integral part of the borough's post-16 provision and duplication of resources was unavoidable. Long-term planning and a clear policy of borough needs might have avoided such frustration. The specialist careers officer's annual statistics would have informed borough official that school-leavers with moderate learning difficulties comprised 60% of the population leaving special schools, with clear implications for future provision. Yet there had been no attempt to integrate these pupils either at school or post-school level. It is ironical that Harefield selected its minority groups of

special needs to integrate while neglecting the majority group: yet it is typical of the assimilation model they adopted.

A similar lack of policy was indicated in the post-16 provision offered to pupils from the school for children with severe learning difficulties. This unit was created in 1980 as a response to curriculum initiatives to encourage independence and the development of living skills. The way in which it was housed reflects lack of policy and reliance on goodwill and imponderables. A flat on the adjacent estate was offered by the council and was ideal in terms of resources, enabling the students to cook, clean and run a home in a realistic setting. However, the training in independent living skills was thwarted by the harshness of the environment. As two students were returning from a shopping trip one morning they were physically attacked as they passed under the dark walkways leading up to the flat. After that, staff anxiety and parental caution forced a transfer into a classroom in the same abandoned school building which housed the unit for school-leavers with moderate learning difficulties, which was obviously severely inhibiting in terms of integration. These students are now housed in a victorian terrace some three miles from the mother school. They can run the house and use local amenities. Since the inception of the new Spencer College, these students include a day every week at college as part of their programme, as do the students with moderate learning difficulties. Post-16 provision for school-leavers from the other special schools in Harefield was grossly inadequate until the establishment of the pilot scheme with Fraser College in 1981 and the establishment of Spencer College in 1983.

Use of Research

It might have been hoped that Borough Education Officers

would have learnt from the mistakes of earlier integration schemes and avoided these when establishing a pilot project at Fraser College. Yet there was to be a pattern of deceit, inadequate resourcing, lack of curriculum planning and staff development which long-term policy might have combated. Sadly, Harefield reflects both neglect of research evidence and weak long-term policy in its recent history. When Tizard and Hewison (1981) completed their project on the value of parental involvement in reading schemes, which had been researched in Harefield, they concluded that, in the multi-ethnic, inner-city area where they had gathered evidence, the impact of parental involvement on reading performance was dramatically effective. For a borough which purports to offer equality of opportunities this would appear to be a programme which had to be supported for,

> ..it could explode the whole area of primary practice. Two years on the explosion has turned out to be a damp squib..to the apparent chagrin of the Chief Education Officer, the LEA had not backed the scheme with money.. (Booth, Potts and Swann, 1982, p.32)

In this borough where literacy skill on leaving school are among the lowest in Britain (HMI Report, 1984), such inertia is catastrophic. As the events at Fraser College illustrate, lack of policy is not merely inconvenient - it acts as a negation of everything that integration represents, impeding change and stifling ideology.

Chapter 11

FRASER COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Fraser College was the only college of further education in Harefield until the opening of a new community college in September 1983. In this chapter I will describe the history of the Fraser College; the structure of the institution in its departmental divisions; the process of staff development which existed and the status of the college as an educational provision in the locality.

History

The site of Fraser College of Technology has had many associations with education for nearly 150 years. Fraser Polytechnic, the forerunner of the college, was established in a Georgian villa which had been converted into a boarding school as long ago as 1828. It was a centre for subjects such as art, science, mathematics, plumbing and electricity, and became known as Fraser Polytechnic. At first, it was confined mainly to evening classes, as was the pattern in London, and in 1911 there were 1,191 students paying 5/- per session for their first subject and 2/6 for each subsequent subject. During the day the building was occupied by a small School of Art and, between 1901 and 1913, by Harefield County School, which set the co-education pattern for the secondary schools of the county. In 1910 a large new block was built to the south of the old house, comprising an assembly hall and classrooms, which is now the oldest part of the present college. The county school was moved in 1913 to new premises north of the college, then to become the Community Unit of the college in 1976.

It is ironical to note that Fraser College, which by 1980 was catering to a broad catchment area and failing to serve the educational needs of many local young people, had once offered a

valuable local service in its Junior Technical School. A secretary in Fraser College recalled the period in the early 1950s where the Technical School

> ..was for girls and boys of 13 plus to learn a trade, commercial and craft. They stayed for three years and it was a very good training and education.. (Interview: Secretary of 40 years standing, 1985).

These secondary schools of building and commerce, attached to the polytechnics, were phased out by the early sixties, and heralded the growth of new and more academic departments within the college, effectively alienating their previous, unskilled clientel. Fraser College serves as an interesting example of an institution which has changed role over its historical progression and had severed the link which related secondary education to vocational training in the 1960s, only to find this link difficult to rejoin in the 1980s.

Growth and the establishment of advanced vocational work marked the character of Fraser College. In 1955 a School of Building and a Department of Hairdressing and Floristry were established. In 1963, it was a Science Department, and in 1969 an Engineering Department, so that, by 1970, because of the increasing amount of advanced work being undertaken, the borough council agreed to the college being renamed Fraser College of Technology. In its sporadic expansion Fraser College had lost any central ethos it might once have had, so that, by the period immediately prior to the integration scheme of 1981, there were separate departmental sections, each with their own distinctive ethos and with contact between departments dissipated.

Institutional Structure

The College is now divided into five departments: Building, Business and Administrative Studies, Engineering, Environmental Health and Science, and Health, Hairdressing and Floristry. The

PE Department and the Community Unit are not autonomous departments and are directly administered by the Vice Principal. With several hundred students in each department, they function as separate entities in administrative and social terms, with their own departmental secretarial staff. Lecturers are appointed to departments and they tend to teach mainly within that department, with occasional servicing of other departments for certain subjects. It would be easy to attend classes within one department without ever meeting or communicating with staff or students from any other department.

There is a staff common room situated over the staff dining room, in an area remote from much of the building. It has a snooker table at one end, chairs around the perimeter, and coffee tables and easy chairs in the centre. It should be a hub of college communications, considering that over 200 full-time staff and many more part-time staff, technicians and office staff compose the college community, yet it rarely has more than a dozen people in, and they tend to keep within close groups. Apart from being used as a short-cut through to the canteen, the staff common room remains under-used and preserves a bleak, soulless atmosphere. This has evolved through the segregated structure of the institution, where staff and students have coffee in their own sections, and retain their separate identities: the builders in the building department with their own canteen and white, male-dominated ethos; the environmental health officers (50% graduates) in their ivory tower of the modern block; hairdressers and florists in their own areas. Apart from the canteen, library or main hall, there are few areas of common ground. It is significant that the under-use of the staff common room is reflected in the under-use of the student common room. Regularly vandalised and moved from one room to

another, it has survived on minimal resources and sparce comfort.

The segregated nature of the institution is reflected throughout: no cohesion between five separate sections; no common room communication for staff; no common room communication for students; segregated sections of the canteen - one room for students, one for staff. Fraser College is an institution lacking cohesion and communication, and reflecting no perceptable institutional policy.

Staff Development

Like most further education colleges, there is a wide diversity in background and philosophy among staff. Some have come from industry and commerce while others come with academic backgrounds, where they have only experienced educational institutions. Emphasis upon administrative rather than teaching skill as a criterion for promotion, accentuated through the expansion of departments and resultant complexity of management, creates a competitive, stressful atmosphere. Those members of staff teaching less prestigious courses than those carrying high academic status become aware of their poor prospects for promotion. It is significant that, in the Department of Environmental Health and Science, all 10 of the lecturers teaching the course for environmental health officers are of senior lecturer status, while in other departments there might only be two staff out of twenty within this category. Political factions thrive within the network of sub-groups in the college. A rigidly hierarchial structure inhibits a fostering of loyalty to institution or colleagues, and tension, disharmony and distrust between departments prevents a sharing of resources.

The fragmented nature of the college is reflected in the irregular pattern of staff development which has evolved. Staff developed new practices and explored innovative approaches within

their separate departments, without any forum available for inter-departmental exchange of ideas and information (Castling 1985).

> ..Staff development at Fraser College is seen as being haphazard, adhoc and unsystematised..course attendance is seen to be lacking in follow up either in terms of dissemination of knowledge gained to a wider group or in practical use of skills acquired..
> (Castling, 1985, p.2).

The image of staff development within the institution is blurred: many staff perceive external courses, which are the means of enhancing promotion prospects, as the only form of staff development, so regarding the range of activities which constitute internal development as irrelevant and ill-valued. Within this ethos staff are apathetic or positively hostile towards staff development such as preparing for students who might present with learning difficulties. The move to develop new approaches and to extend curriculum innovation has been ad hoc, patchy and strictly departmental rather than institutional. Thus, rather than offering the strength and thrust of a whole-college policy, initiatives are diffused in their dispersal in departmental sections. A commitment to the special needs area, has been delegated to caring departments, such as the Community Unit and the Department of Floristry, Health and Hairdressing (traditionally a womens' department with a woman Head). Without a whole-college policy it has been possible for other departments to abdicate their responsibility for this group of students, thus effectively placing them in special provision within the mainstream.

College Status

By the early 1980s, Fraser College could regard itself as a high-level college, using its proportion of category two/three work as a measure of Burnham status. This awards categories from

one to five, according to the academic and professional standing of the work. Thus, the post-graduate course for environmental health officers carries more weight than A levels, which carry more weight than basic typing courses. At the very bottom of this table is the range of special course provision for students with special needs. At Fraser College there were 34% of students engaged in category two/three, 49% in category 1V and only 17% in category five (1980 figures). Yet, at the same time there were 185 sixteen year olds, 260 seventeen year olds 153 eighteen year olds and 47 nineteen year olds who sought non-advanced further education outside their own borough of Harefield (1980/81 figures). At this stage, the Borough of Harefield began to plan a new college of further education, to cater for this evident gap in provision.

Fraser College was able to resist change through its well-established success in advanced vocational work this very success producing a marked arrogance in its ethos. Referred to, ironically, by one assistant education officer as an oasis of calm within a very turbulent and troubled area of Harefield, it chose to continue on its traditional path, ignoring the unmet needs which surrounded the college and offering assimilation into its prestigious network, while disregarding the work being developed in the area of pre-vocational training. Fraser College could not be seen as a community college as it failed to serve the needs of the local community. The one concession which it made to the local community was the establishment of a community unit in the old county school building which existed up the road from the main college. This was created in 1976 and represented an innovative move in that it offered a workshop for young people

> with special educational needs, as well as facilities for mature students from ethnic minorities. However, it remained fixed in a locational model in its relation to

the main body of Fraser College, breeding subsequent conflict.

This then is the borough and college into which students with physical disabilities are to be integrated. An integration scheme can only be as integrated as the community into which it is absorbed. Fraser College can clearly be regarded as a fragmented, disparate community - not integrated in any respect either socially, academically or physically. There was no policy on integration. The general level of participation from students and staff was weak and hierarchial. The Borough of Harefield were aware of the college's deficiencies in relation to non-advanced work, for they were already embarking on a new venture to provide for this area. Yet, with these mitigating factors evident from the onset, a pilot scheme was established between Hillcroft School and Fraser College in September 1981.

Chapter 12

INTEGRATION IN FRASER COLLEGE (1976-1983)

I will reflect on the situation as it existed when I took up the post of liaison lecturer for disabled students, in January 1983. I will discuss this in three distinct stages starting with the development of provision for students with special needs at Fraser College, from 1976 (when the Community Unit was formed) to 1981 when students with physical disabilities were integrated, which sets the scene for the pilot scheme of September 1981 to July 1982, which was monitored by a liaison teacher, seconded from Hillcroft School, and was ultimately to become the fiasco of the autumn term of 1982, when no liaison teacher was present. In describing and evaluating these developments, a picture of Fraser College and special needs will emerge. It will illustrate the model of integration which was operating, the way in which disability was perceived, the institutional response to the Warnock Report, the theory and reality of the LEA approach to integration, and the events which led to the breakdown of that autumn term.

Without a chronological perspective, the developments of the scheme from January 1983 lack dimension. The hundred year, irregular growth of Fraser College and its departments created its segregated, non-cohesive climate. When it responded to local needs with the establishment of a separate Community Unit, it was because there was no room in the main college, the successful advanced courses taking priority. The local needs were related to the changing population of the borough, and could not have been anticipated when the college was first established. I consider it essential to understand the complexities involved in this integration scheme. A background perspective illustrates the misconceptions which led to a perpetuation of damaging

stereotypes. A record of past relations between management and special needs staff indicates the rift which impeded productive curriculum development. The contrasting developments at Fraser College and Hillcroft School suggest why the pilot scheme was doomed to failure. In presenting a background to the events which follow, I intend to clarify the reasons why this placement model of integration was unsuccessful. I think it important to recognise that there are no villains of the piece, and that the problems which developed arose from the inherent weakness of the model itself rather than anything of the participants' making. Returning to my introductory discussion of Davies' (1984) roles in a drama which depended upon caricature, the villains which emerge play their parts within this specific plot but retain alternative personas when in other settings. The plot itself precipitated the villains.

The Community Unit

Where Fraser College presented a formidable exterior, the ambience of the Community Unit was accessible and welcoming, not in terms of its physical state, but in that,

> the people here are warm and friendly. Students can just wander in here, but, if they had to go up the steps of the main college and find their way round that building, we wouldn't get anything like the relationship with the community which we have at present.
> (member of Community Unit staff, interviewed 1986).

The Community Unit was formed with a commitment to serve the needs of the local, multi-racial, population. It provided training in typing, numeracy and literacy for women returning to work after bringing up their families. It responded to requests by offering courses in Black Studies geared to the local West Indian community. A training workshop was established for special school leavers and secondary school low achievers, to develop a programme of work preparation. While the Community

Unit was actively fulfilling a responsive role in the locality, it was socially and physically separate from the rest of Fraser College. Within the old school building - with its high windows, peeling paint and dark passages - was to be found a homogeneity distinctly lacking in the remainder of the college. Staff displayed a caring for students and worked as a close, loyal team, sharing a central ethos. The Community Unit had the advantage that it was established for a specific purpose, and that staff who elected to work in it shared a commitment to that purpose. The clear ethos of the unit gave it strength and resiliance.

Its separateness and strength of purpose was to provoke stress between the Unit and the main college, with its very different and diffuse character,

> ..Tension and conflict between unit staff and management, has tended to isolate us from the college as a whole. It's a conflict of educational philosophy. There are certain assumptions being made on both sides about the kind of provision further education should offer, to whom it should offer courses, and who constitutes a proper further education student. (member of community unit staff 1986).

Perhaps the status of staff in the Unit suggests most graphically how the college management perceived this provision and this type of student. While all other departments had a head of department as well as principal and senior lecturers, the Unit had a senior lecturer in charge, accompanied by small team of lecturers. It could be argued that so small a Unit merits only a low-ranking team. However, while the Burnham Categories command status within further education, a separate Unit which is committed to non-advanced work cannot hope to compete in the process of staff advancement. Few staff in the main college participated in the work of the Unit and it effectively ran as provision existing alongside, not within, Fraser College.

The Training Workshop

Developments within the Training Workshop illustrate the tension between Unit and college management. The senior lecturer in charge of the Community Unit was also manager of the Training Workshop. In this dual role he was able to maintain complete control over the Unit, its student selection, curriculum development and liason with management. When he left to take up another post his role as Senior Lecturer was adopted by an established member of the Unit team, but an outsider was appointed training workshop manager. This provided a threat to the autonomy of the Unit and an opportunity for management to infiltrate an area which had become impenetrable. It was not surprising in these circumstances that the new manager was to be given a hard time. This outside lecturer took up her post at the same time as I did and I was able to record her progress from January 1983. When examining her experience within the hostile society of the Unit, I recorded what had preceded it. The us-and-them mentality which arose was fostered in the divisive climate where sub-groups thrived (Tipton, 1976).

A Different Philosophy

The staff of the Unit emphasise that it is not physical distance alone which precludes close liaison with the main college, but the difference in educational philosophy. The Unit creates ease of access by enabling students with no academic qualifications to join courses where they can use their previous practical experience and learn new skills to aid progression. Fraser College has successfully established a reputation for courses in vocational and A level work, where competition is fierce (200 applicants for 25 places in Hairdressing and Nursery Nursing, for example) and where selection on academic merit necessarily operates. These contrasting policies have widened

the gap between the horizons of students attending the unit and those attending the College.

> I think students get the impression sometimes that we're very much the poor cousins..our students have no canteen facilities..they don't use the main college library and we have to make quite an effort to get them involved in the student union..
> (member of community unit staff,1986).

While progression is available in theory, it has rarely operated in practice and the 1984/5 figures are typical of the pattern which had developed by 1981: only 35% of the unit students continued to study after their basic foundation course; of these 35% - 43% followed pre-vocational courses, 36% continued in general education and the remaining 21% were doing O, A or degree level work. The implications were that unit students generally remained segregated from the remainder of the college. They were passive participants in the students union, under-used college facilities such as library and canteen, were dependent on main college resources without having an equal share in them and felt poor cousins within the institution.

The effect of this marked segregation on staff at the unit was to develop a forceful sub-group ready to fight for the rights of a student body they regarded as under-valued by management. It is not surprising that the most radical union activity, regularly in opposition to management, was fostered within the unit staffroom. The structure of the institution had created the division and subsequent conflict. Had Fraser College regarded community needs as being a priority within their educational brief, they would have made this department an integral part of their structure, have created opportunities for integration into other departments and encouraged staff from other sections to contribute to courses. The unit staff gradually became a thorn in the flesh of the management of Fraser College, yet this

situation could have been foreseen. When a unit-mentality develops and people feel that they exist separately and are the poor relations in the deal, conflict and resentment are inevitable.

It is important to appreciate this position before the pilot scheme of 1981-1982 for students with disabilities is described. In curriculum terms, the Unit was the section of Fraser College which was able to offer most for the students coming from Hillcroft School as staff had worked with students with moderate learning difficulties, including some with physical and sensory handicaps, since the Training Workshop had been established in 1976. The basic skills courses run by the Unit had open access which ideally suited the majority of pupils from Hillcroft who had few formal academic qualifications. If the Unit is shown to have failed these students, it is because Fraser College has failed the Unit in denegrating it to a subservient status.

The Pilot Project

In September 1981, seven pupils with physical disabilities and two pupils with hearing impairment began their further education at Fraser College. They were from Hillcroft School and Castle School, the two special schools in Harefield which had been engaged in integration over a number of years, and the link was a response of the borough of Harefield and Fraser College to the publication of the Warnock Report in 1978. While Castle School was to send two pupils to the college, with regular peripatetic support, the link was primarily between Hillcroft School and Fraser College. Liaison was established between the head of Hillcroft School and the principal of Fraser College, but, whilst the successful link between Newcross and Hillcroft had entailed elaborate preliminaries (a talk from the head of Hillcroft to all staff; all pupils and parents being informed;

disability being discussed as a tutorial topic; physical alterations being made) this link was made in haste, and with minimal internal consultation. It represented the aspirations of three people: the head of Hillcroft School, who had created integration schemes in primary and secondary schools and for whom a scheme in further education would constitute the final triumph; the special needs adviser, who would then be able to count this as one of his innovations within a borough which was gaining a reputation for successful integration; the college principal, who felt that he ought to respond to Warnock , but who wanted no concessions made to students with learning difficulties. It was a dangerous mixture of conflicting ideologies and, consequently, much that should have been said went unsaid, particularly in regard to the needs of the pupils from Hillcroft. It was an example of a theory which was doomed to disintegrate in practice.

This set the seal on the whole character of the project, which was to become one of conflict and disharmony between Management and NATFHE (National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education) Union. As Harefield should have learnt to its cost, integration cannot be confined to a private management deal. In September 1981, students in wheelchairs and with mobility problems were brought into Fraser College when it was ill-prepared for them physically, when many staff were unaware that they were coming, and when curriculum implications had been overlooked or deliberately ignored. Of the seven students with disabilities, one had come from a residential school in the country, another had become paralysed through a recent accident, and the remaining five were from Hillcroft School.

Objectives

The objectives of the pilot scheme were described as follows:

> ..the students taking advantage of existing courses at the college; involving the expertise and co-operation of the academic and non-academic staff; modifying, and improving where necessary, access in the college buildings for the disabled students: eg. provision of ramps, modification to lift, toilets; liaising with the special school and other relevant institutions, agencies and professional bodies..
> (Harefield Education Department, 1981).

Taking each of these objectives in turn, I will reflect on how successfully the pilot scheme was able to respond to them. The objective of ..take advantage of existing courses.. could only be met if those existing courses were appropriate. Fraser College offered vocational training in Hairdressing, Building, Beauty Therapy, Nursery Nursing and Floristry - which were not courses likely to be selected by students in wheelchairs often with poor hand control. A level courses could only be taken if the required O level grades had been obtained, and none of the pupils at Hillcroft had either done O levels, or had Grade 1 CSEs. At planning stages it should have been apparent that curriculum modification was needed to create appropriate course provision. Staff in the Unit were used to operating individually designed programmes, and could have advised on curriculum content and method. However, there appeared to be no allowance made for curriculum development within this assimilation model.

In order to meet the objective of ..involving the expertise and co-operation of the academic and non-academic staff a whole-college policy should have been applied. Instead, a teacher from Hillcroft School was seconded for the year to act as a liaison link between the school and college, and to support the students with disabilities. Two welfare assistants were employed to be responsible for the care of these students. Both initiatives

worked against this proposed objective. The person appointed to support the students to be integrated was from outside: the liaison teacher herself had first to become an integrated member of the community. The appointment of outside welfare staff specifically for the use of the students to be integrated was a segregating measure in itself, as it precluded the sharing of these resources within the whole community. It was not surprising then that non-academic staff, specifically caretakers and established college welfare officers, resented being expected to co-operate in supporting students with disabilities when they had been disregarded in planning for integration. If academic staff from within the college were to share their expertise and act co-operatively, they also needed to be involved in the planning stage of integration. Co-operation could not be developed by accident but should have been fostered from the start through consultation. Staff in the unit had developed appropriate expertise themselves and were recognised by members of Harefield Education Department as being exceptionally skilled in instructing students with special needs but they were not consulted in planning stages not involved in policy-making.

The objective of ..modifying, and improving where necessary, access to the college buildings for the disabled students eg. provision of ramps, modification to lift, toilets was only met after protracted and contested delays. Whilst it might be possible in exceptional circumstances to establish provision for students with mobility problems without first improving access the experience of this scheme revealed that it only served to create stress and frustration for the students and anxiety for staff. Among the seven students with physical handicaps, four were in wheelchairs. Only one area of Fraser College had been designed to include lifts, this being the newest

addition - an eight storey tower block, which had two lifts up to the seventh floor. This block housed Business Studies, Engineering and Environmental Health. None of the nine students in the pilot scheme selected courses in the tower block - the only part of Fraser College which could offer suitable access - because they had chosen either basic skills courses in the Unit or O levels in the old part of Fraser College. The old building, in which three students with mobility problems were studying for O levels, was limited in access. The students could only move on the first floor which housed Hairdressing and Floristry, but were unable to get to the college office and shop on the ground floor nor to the art rooms, cookery rooms and laboratories on the second floor. One boy with muscular dystrophy, in an electric wheelchair, had to sit in the corridor or work in isolation in a classroom on the first floor whilst the rest of the art class which he had elected to join were in the second floor Art room.

This was a clear mockery of the principle of integration, and staff who had been critical of management' hasty and ill-conceived scheme were quick to point to the unsatisfactory nature of the situation for these students. There were no suitable toilet facilities for students in wheelchairs within Fraser College, so that, if a student wet or soiled his or her clothes during the day, he or she had to be sent home or have a parent come with a change of clothes. Of course, adaptations to the buildings could not have been made overnight, but there should have been a detailed plan of essential modification - one which all the college community were involved in discussing. Most of the members of Fraser College (both students and staff) were unaware of the scheme until they met students in wheelchairs, or on crutches, in the corridors. Throughout the Pilot Year there

was an impression within the institution that this was just an experiment designed by management, in which the students with disabilities were the guinea pigs. Neither staff nor students felt that this scheme involved them in any way, or that these students were becoming participants in their community.

Curriculum needs should have been considered at the outset, and consideration given as to where the seven students were to do their courses. The Unit was to be the answer for four of them, but although two of the four were in wheelchairs, the Unit had no lift and most classrooms were on the first floor. Staff had to carry students in wheelchairs up stone steps. To this excessive physical strain was added their constant anxiety about fire regulations. Had Fraser College been an integrated community, it should have been possible to have accommodated the classes comprising students in wheelchairs in rooms in an accessible building like the tower block. An integrated community would thus have been able to work together to plan suitable accommodation. In theory, Fraser College could have altered the location of classes to accommodate these kinds of students into mainstream groups. In practice, the established animosity between Unit and management, the disparate ethos of the departmental structure, and the general lack of consultation and communication prohibited this.

The objective of liaising with the special school and other relevant institutions, agencies and professional bodies.... emphasises the liaison rather than the teaching role. Sally Hide, the liaison teacher, was in an ambivalant position in that she was still on the staff of Hillcroft School while working as a member of staff at Fraser College. The methodology and ethos of both institutions could not have been more different, Hillcroft being child-centred and caring, Fraser College subject-centred

and anonymous, and it must have been stressful for her to have to work between the two. It would surely have been preferable for the college to have appointed a lecturer to be responsible for integration, as well as offering a subject specialism. The lecturer would thus have been an integral part of the college community. As it was, the liaison officer halved her allegiance between school and college, whilst feeling that she belonged to neither. Moreover, as Sally's role was perceived by her colleagues to be part of the unpopular management experiment, it became subject to the critical, apparently hostile, scrutiny of unit staff. Sally became an unwilling participant in the fight between Unit and management. Unit staff resented the role she played with management and saw her as a potential threat. Management tried to polarise her views by emphasising the political struggles they had experienced with unit staff.

The Liaison Role

As liaison officer, Sally was able to investigate developments at other further education colleges, such as Brixton and South Thames, and offer suggestions to college management. She was able to make contact with bodies such as the National Bureau for Handicapped Students and local voluntary agencies which offer support and transport. However, her role as liaison agent was designed to take precedence over that of lecturer. This role largely consisted of public relations directed at maintaining co-operation between host institution and special school, facilitating good relations between the incoming students and the college community and representing the students within the management structure of Fraser College. This role allowed little time for other vital tasks such as ensuring that the curriculum related to the needs of the students, establishing a

system of staff development to improve teaching methods for these students and investigating the progression available to them within the institution or borough.

Selecting Appropriate Provision

After the first term and a half of the pilot year, Sally presented a report of progress which indicated that,

> ..with the exception of two students out of a total of nine (both hearing-impaired), the remaining seven cannot take advantage of the existing courses in the curriculum of the college..the four students who are in the unit are not suited to the course. The unit follows a very precise programme of training for a particular type of student and the staff hold the view that the physically handicapped students in question are not suited. It was agreed to admit these students on condition that a more suitable course of study would be identified and made available in the following academic year..
> (Progress Report of Liaison Officer, March 1982, Table 9).

If unit staff were committed to the individual needs of students and devised separate programmes why were they unhappy to take students with physical disabilities into their courses? To answer this we must return to the history of the Unit to understand why they were primarily involved in a particular type of student. The needs of the local, ethnic-minority community, were fulfilled by extending the basic skills of numeracy and literacy, providing an initial training in typing, new technology and commerce and fostering ethnic self-esteem by teaching Black Studies. The Unit was intended to counter the disadvantaged position in which many students from ethnic minorities were placed in the education system. Its whole ethos was developed through a commitment to combat educational disadvantage, in an overly political context. It is not surprising, therefore, that the bond between staff and students in the Unit is so close and that loyalty to the ideals of the Unit creates passionate intensity. The view that the physically handicapped students in question are not suited has to be understood within this context.

Staff in the Unit were not insensitive to the students coming

Table 9

1981-1982 Pilot Scheme: first year

9 disabled students were in the pilot scheme.
2 were hearing impaired; 7 were physically handicapped. The 2 students from the school for the deaf, had experienced totally integrated provision, and had coped with a mainstream education, both in terms of curriculum and social integration.. The 6 students from the Day P.H. School, or a residential special school, had received a segregated education until 1981. 1 student had been in an accident since leaving school and was tetraplegic as a result.

DISABILITY	COURSE	OUTCOME
hearing impairment	Day release, Community care. Unit	satisfactory
profound deafness	A levels	satisfactory
spina bifida (wheelchair)	Basic skills A. Unit	unsatisfactory
spina bifida	basic skills B. Unit	unsatisfactory
tetraplegia (wheelchair)	Basic skills B. Unit	unsatisfactory
epilepsy	Basic skills A. Unit	unsatisfactory
spina bifida (wheelchair)	O levels	unsatisfactory
arthrogryphosis	O levels	unsatisfactory
muscular dystrophy (wheelchair)	O levels	unsatisfactory

(criteria drawn from the examination of: The Evaluation Report , March 1982, written by the liaison lecturer.)

from Hillcroft School, but they accurately assessed their needs as being related to complex disabilities and segregated education, and, as such, incompatible with the specific programme to counteract educational disadvantage which had been designed

for students from ethnic minorities.

The educational disadvantage of students from Hillcroft School reflected the cumulative impact of disability. Many had spent long periods in hospital so they needed some compensatory education, especially in numeracy and literacy. They had often been over-protected by cautious parents, so that as they were unable to experience the social life taken for granted by their peer group, they needed to acquire both confidence and competence. Several had complex disabilities which could result in learning difficulties and problems in spatial and perceptual awareness. Table 8 indicates that this applied to up to 85% of the pupil population at Hillcroft School by 1986. The need to plan a modified teaching programme, suited to these specific difficulties, appears evident. Such planning to modify the conventional, formal curriculum was taking place at Hillcroft School at the same time that the pilot scheme at Fraser College was being initiated. Yet, the quite rational resistance of Unit staff towards a convenient mismatching of needs to existing courses was taken for mere truculence by management. It was a timely warning of the short sighted planning to follow, and a characteristic approach from a blinkered hierarchy that saw any special course as appropriate for all special needs.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Not only had the four students within the Unit progressed unsatisfactorily, but the remaining three students with physical handicaps had made poor progress with O level work (Table 9). This was not unexpected, given the educational background of the students. They had taken three or four CSEs at Hillcroft gaining average grade 4 awards, which would not have qualified them as suitable O level candidates. As Fraser College offered few O

level courses, seeing this to be the task of schools and adult education, those that were available were directly related to the college's A level curriculum or vocational courses. Biology and English O levels were offered as evening classes as they complemented courses in Hairdressing, or Nursery Nursing. The Hillcroft students were thus restricted in their choice of O levels, and, moreover, had to attend some evening sessions, involving them in transport difficulties, as they were generally dependent on school transport provision.

Those students coming into the pilot year directly from the school-leavers class of Hillcroft appeared to experience the greatest difficulty in adapting to Fraser College. Stephen, already described as being unable to participate in his chosen Art class, was an example of a boy who found the experience daunting and distressing. Terry had come from Hillcroft, but having been at a residential college for a year, he was able to apply his consequent added maturity. However, even for him, O levels were not the most appropriate choice and, after a long period in hospital with an ulcerated foot, during the critical Spring term, he was only able to complete one of his four O level courses. Simon had attended a residential special school and greatly enjoyed his social life at Fraser College, but neglected his curriculum studies. Of these three students, none were to achieve grades D or above.

Jack, aged 22, paralysed below the waist after an accident at the age of 18, was the member of the group who gained most from his period at Fraser College. Although the Basic Skills course in the Unit, in which he was enrolled, was not ideally suited to his particular needs, he brought something of his maturity and experience to the group. He had a disability uncomplicated by intellectual impairment, and was the only one of

the group whose handicap was recent and not congenital. Jack was an example of the very student the management of Fraser College conceived as being disabled, rather than having special educational needs. The model which was adopted was implicitly directed at students who required physical adaptations to the college premises or extra communication aids. This overlooked the effects of many congenital disorders, the disadvantages of special education, and the additional learning difficulties which often accompany complex disabilities. Management appeared to segregate special needs students, in a locational setting, while those with disability were to be assimilated.

Designing Course Structure

As a result of Sally's presenting her highly critical progress report, a Working Party was established to design a special course which would meet the needs of Hillcroft students. This was to be the Bridging Course which would help to prepare students from Hillcroft for progression on to other courses:

> ..consideration should be given to a two year basic foundation course leading to O levels, many of which would be Mode 111. The course would consist of two groups and would be open to other than handicapped students - particularly to members of ethnic minorities - and would receive full pastoral support. (Minutes of the Working Party on the Bridging Course, 3.2.82).

Implicit in the Working Party comments is the attitude that members of ethnic minorities are in need of special support. The educational barriers which have created that need are not challenged. Whilst the Working Party elaborated the academic content of the course, it neglected two fundamental issues: resource implications, and student needs. As a special course had not been planned when the scheme was established, there had been no LEA funding provision. Neither, it seems, had the complex disabilities and learning problems of many of the pupils of Hillcroft been taken into account.

The member of the Working Party who introduced the issue of student needs was the senior lecturer of the Unit and Workshop manager, John Cook, whose experience in designing programmes for students with special needs was extensive. Significantly, as the minutes show, his potentially valuable contribution to course design was disregarded because of internecine hostilities:

> John indicated that the Working Party had lost sight entirely of the sort of student for whom the course was designed. Having the majority of the physically handicapped students in the unit (4/7) he thought they would not be capable of taking the course outlined. The Chairman reminded the Working Party that the opinion of the liaison teacher and head of the special school was that physically handicapped students of the ability of those who had entered O level classes were being hampered by their earlier school history..there were calls for the college to provide a multiplicity of O levels in order to attain complete integration..and counter calls that the only meaningful new course in the college would be of the vocational preparation type (ibid).

I quote the minutes at length because I see fundamental flaws in the adopted model of integration being illustrated therein. Since John Cook could offer such valuable experience and expertise to assist the Working Party in designing suitable course provision, why was he not allowed to exert more influence than he did? To answer this we must return to the history of the Unit and realise that John Cook had become too powerful for the comfort of management, so that they were likely to regard any comment he made as a potential threat. Thus, when he made suggestions, the Chairman immediately countered them by citing Sally and her head teacher as representatives of those who really understood the students needs. Yet how thoroughly had the Working Party discussed the latter's views?

Although both Sally and her head teacher may have felt constrained by their positions in the placement model, I must confess that they seem to have been unusually tentative in

presenting those difficulties which they must have foreseen. Of course, they were aware that they were guests in a host institution and had therefore to be tactful. Consequently, they seem to have avoided presenting both the complex disabilities of most pupils from Hillcroft, and the curriculum changes which were already underway in that school. They assumed, rather than discussed, progression. The unlikelihood of their students developing from grade 4 CSEs to O level work was ignored and any suggestion that the real needs of their students might lie beyond external examination criteria seemed too delicate a matter to discuss. When John Cook was implying this, he was dismissed as being less informed than others. I regard him as the member of the committee most conscious of the real needs of these students, and least afraid to present them, but he proposed curriculum changes which were unacceptable to management. Unit staff were aware of the value of pre-vocational education and were frustrated by its omission within Fraser College. Had the lower rungs (Baillie, 1985) been present, integration would have been a practical progression.

Deteriorating Conditions

The Autumn term of 1982 saw the integration scheme reaching its most vulnerable stage. The recommendations of the Working Party on a Bridging Course - that such a provision had to be established from September 1982 - had been ignored and no such course was prepared. The adaptations and modifications to the buildings - deemed essential by the NATFHE Union to accommodate students with mobility problems - had not been started. Sally Hide resigned at the end of August, informing the LEA of the unsatisfactory nature of provision at Fraser College. This left the two welfare assistants to cope throughout the Autumn term. Two of the seven students who had started in September 1981 were

staying to attend other courses and two young men - one from Hillcroft, one from the comprehensive - were to start. All four were in wheelchairs. Furious at borough and institutional inertia, NATFHE refused to allow the four students with physical disabilities into Fraser College until three weeks after the beginning of term. This caused considerable local publicity, including newspaper headlines like:

COLLEGE ROW OVER DISABLED

which did little to enhance the public image of Fraser College. Management blamed the political callousness of the Union whose most prominent members were, incidentally, working in the Unit. NATFHE blamed the indifference of management, which had, they claimed, totally failed to provide adequate facilities for these students.

At this stage I was teaching the school-leavers at Hillcroft, and was able to survey the situation from outside where the climate in the special school was becoming emotionally charged. It appeared to me at that time that the Union was being hostile and unhelpful. The college management's suggestion that they only wished to bring students with disabilities into the community of Fraser College with the minimum of fuss, from the vantage-point of Hillcroft School anyway, seemed to be sweet reason. On reflection, and having worked within the framework of the scheme for nearly four years, I consider that assimilation, with the minimum of fuss, was impossible, and that management's aspiration indicated their lack of understanding of the needs of these students and the limitations of the college curriculum. I also recognise that such unwelcome public protest was the most effective way of NATFHE shaming management into action. Either the integration scheme was to be seriously treated, by direct and

immediate response to the recommendations which had been made, or it was to be dismissed as a failed experiment. This Union protest was forcing management to reveal its implicit position. NATFHE were thus in a position to throw stones, although they resisted being slandered by the press.

> ..there is an attempt to make the unions appear the villains of this piece. The disabled students last year spent a lot of time stuck out in corridors. It's true the students are being shunted all over the place. The lift is often out of action. When it does work you've got to queue up to use it. There are no proper sluicing facilities. We've got a medical room as big as a toilet. (NATFHE member quoted in local paper. 28.10.82. Harefield News p.8).

To demonstrate the inadequacies of the college in coping with the needs of students in wheelchairs, NATFHE members performed an experiment with the fire alarms. These they set off at regular intervals through the term, usually when disabled students were above the second floor in the tower block. As the lifts were out-of-action during a fire alarm, it was assumed that disabled students would have to be lifted out of their wheelchairs and carried down the steep flights of stone steps.

The stormy period is recalled by a participant:

> ..when we had just taken Terry and Michael in the lift to the fifth floor for their class, the fire bell would ring. Two members of staff were allocated to each disabled student to carry down in emergencies. They would have to run from all over the building to reach the students. When we eventually reached the ground floor with them, having carried them in their chairs down the five flights, there would be a member of NATFHE with a stop watch, checking on how long it had taken us. There was such tension in the atmosphere. It was terrible. I never want to go through that again. We felt that we were completely unwanted.
> (Welfare Assistant 1981-1986. interviewed 1985).

It was unfortunate that the welfare assistants had been unwilling protagonists in the political battles of the Autumn term, but it was reasonable that there should have been general disquiet at the lack of planning for what might happen to disabled people in the case of a fire. Fraser College was a more complex building

in which to cater for people with mobility problems, than a comprehensive school, like Newcross. While most schools rarely reach above four floors, the tower block had eight floors and the main building two floors. Science laboratories were unreachable because of steep steps, and the Building Department, in a separate three-storey building, had no lift and flights of steep, stone steps. Had fire officers been called in at the planning stage (when all the college community should have been informed) the problems could have been foreseen and solutions proposed by experts. As it was, the fire officers visited some months after the students in wheelchairs were already on courses at Fraser College, and then suggested measures which had considerable funding implications. At the planning stage the Borough of Harefield should have made funds available to cater for this vital contingency. Moreover, not only should fire regulations have been drafted and communicated to all staff before students in wheelchairs were enrolled, but there should have been consultation and in-service training at all levels, during the summer term of 1980-1981, so that everyone was competent to deal with the problems created by the scheme. Instead, confusion and disharmony was provoked. One lecturer arrived to teach a class, in October 1982, to find a boy in a wheelchair, of whom he knew nothing, which was embarrassing for both. Caretakers were expected to carry furniture, move students in wheelchairs and cope with the additional traffic of tail-lift buses without prior consultation or recognition of the importance of their role in the proceedings. Some of them became actively obstructive as a consequence of their inept handling by management.

The Impact of Stress

The tensions and disputes of the term produced intolerable

strain for the four boys who found themselves in the spotlight:

> ..The atmosphere was terrible. There were arguments all the time. I'm not taking sides between the union and the administration but the bitterness and lack of flexibility was incredible. I asked if I could attend lectures on the third floor, but I was shunted up to the fourth and sometimes the fifth. There were arguments over who should move a table. The caretakers said it wasn't their job. The lecturers said they wouldn't do it. I'm not blaming everyone. Some people were very helpful. But all the hassle was getting me down. (John, speaking to the local press, 28.10.82).

John, who was severely weakened by advanced Duchenne muscular dystrophy, had appeared to be an excellent candidate for integration in Fraser College. He had been transferred successfully from Hillcroft to Newcross School and, after seven years in the comprehensive school, had gained five O levels above C grades. At eighteen, he was coming to Fraser College to study for two A levels and both John and his family were enthusiastic about the scheme. While some pupils from Hillcroft might have drifted into the scheme without much motivation, John was eager to come. He then had to start his college life with the three-week exclusion, followed by periods out of class due to fire alarms or problems with inaccessible rooms. For someone for whom the least physical effort was strenuous, these few weeks must have been very stressful. John, articulate and intelligent, was quick to present his criticisms, but was unwilling to sustain the fight and dropped out of his course after a month. He knew that he had a limited life-span (he died under three years later) and was, understandably, reluctant to spend his remaining days in an unsympathetic atmosphere.

Viewing this from my position at Hillcroft School, I thought it reprehensible that young people, already burdened with particularly severe physical disabilities, were being subjected to such anxiety and stress. Within the special school sector of both Harefield and surrounding LEAs, the unfavourable publicity

spread like wildfire. As I was to discover to my cost in 1983, the damage would take a long while to make good. Just as Sally Hines had been forced by the nature of her job to dissipate energy into public relations, to help establish the scheme, so I would be forced, after taking up the post in January 1983, to spend time on rebuilding public confidence which had been damaged by the events of the Autumn term, 1982. By the end of that term, only Terry and Michael remained. Stephen, aged seventeen, with the same debilitating Duchenne muscular dystrophy, had been physically excluded from his Art class during the 1981-2 session, and now wanted to take a course in Micro-technology in 1982-3, but had to settle for Electronics instead as the former was taught in an inaccessible classroom. This led to a serious and immediate weakening of motivation, studying a subject which he found boring and for which he was not suitably qualified. On this last point, his tutor informed him that he would not be in a position to sit the exams, nor would he be competent to complete all the elements of the course. This was surely another blow to motivation, as it denied him a share in the tangible rewards of study. If his social life in the college had been agreeable, it might have sustained him. It was, in fact, grim.

Daily Living Conditions

When I visited the welfare assistants in November 1982, they worked in a windowless, stuffy room behind the canteen, distant from all other staff areas. It had formerly been a college medical room, and was meagrely furnished with two beds, two chairs and a sink. In this confined space, the welfare assistants had to help Stephen to use his urinal, change his clothes when necessary, help the physiotherapist when she visited to treat him, and offer similar services to the other three boys.

The space for beds and wheelchairs was severely restricted, and completely lacking in privacy. This room was on the ground floor and, therefore, free from the fire hazards of the upper storeys, but its isolated location and grim interior were depressing. Had Fraser College given due consideration to integrating students with mobility problems into the community, they should have considered placing their welfare facilities in a more central location and a more attractive ambience.

Stephen sat in the dark and cramped medical room when he was not in class. He ate his lunch in the corridor outside the canteen every day, rather than be embarrassed by what he perceived as curious and offensive stares inside. He rarely used the library, or other college facilities, and appeared to form no friendships within his class which might have led to extra curricula interests. By the end of the term, Stephen had accepted a place in a sheltered workshop for the handicapped, where he was to pack and sort items from ten to two-thirty daily. The hours were shorter than his long day at Fraser College. The workshop was near his home, while the college was a long journey into the next borough. Undoubtedly, Stephen was intellectually capable of more than sorting and packing, but it was undemanding work, in a warm, friendly atmosphere. I visited his parents in the December before he left, and they said that college had made him physically ill and mentally depressed. The stress aggravated his physical tiredness. They just wanted him to be contented and occupied, and felt that the workshop would suit. Visiting Stephen during the Spring term in the bright, comfortable surroundings of the workshop, where he had found old school-friends from Hillcroft, I felt that he looked more at ease and content. He had readily acknowledged defeat in a fight where his was no more than a supporting role.

Chapter 13

RECENT INITIATIVES IN HAREFIELD FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

In this chapter I will describe those initiatives, for people with disabilities living in the borough of Harefield, which were to directly influence the pattern of integration at Fraser College. These initiatives include: a new day centre being built, which was to create its own philosophy; the opening of a hostel for students from a specialist residential college to progress into living in the community; general borough developments to increase independent living and encourage a growth of community participation, which included regular college attendance.

The pilot scheme was established between Hillcroft Special School and Fraser College, but there was an underlying assumption within the Borough Education Offices that there would be a wider potential student population, once provisions were publicised. When assessing the changing climate towards disability , I described the changes which were influencing the day centre provision nationally. In Keith Grove, Hammersmith, and The Stone House, Corby, staff had moved away from the traditional model of sheltered employment within a workshop atmosphere. Reasons for this national change in direction were both practical and philosophical. As the national economy became increasingly depressed, there was less contract work available to the day centres. They were therefore forced into considering alternative occupations. The concept of work for its own sake was also being called into question by staff in the social services, who came to regard the workshop model as demeaning and oppressive to anyone, including people with disabilities. This change in attitude reflected the move from a warehouse model of care in residential provision (Dartington, Miller & Gwynne, 1972).

When Dartington, Miller and Gwynne (1981) investigated community housing for young people with disabilities, they described new initiatives like Boundary Road, Camden, where people who would previously have been confined in institutional care because of the severity of their disabilities were being encouraged to make decisions on how they wished to organise their lives, using staff simply as tools rather than initiators. Developments in the Borough of Harefield in the early 1980s reflect national trends, albeit within the forefront of initiatives in social service provision. That Harefield is a Labour-controlled borough, with high priority given to social service provision, is demonstrated in the initiatives for people with disabilites. Developments during this period also indicate the significance of the voluntary sector in pioneering changes in provision.

The Traditional Model

Highfield Hall was a long-established, traditional day centre for people with disabilities in Harefield. It was located near the railway line in a long single-storey hut with a plot of land at the rear. There was an established pattern of contract work like packing toy animals in small boxes, and other small-scale assembly work for local firms. There was a printing section which took on local orders and there was a common room area for those clients not engaged in workshop activities. Teachers came to give art, drama and cookery classes, and individuals had basic numeracy and literacy coaching with a support teacher once a week. Clients came to the centre after leaving school and could stay there for the rest of the lives if they wished. Consequently, there were a substantial proportion of elderly people who were long-stay daily residents and fewer places were available for young people with disabilities who were

seeking day centre placement. The ethos of Highfield Hall was protective and supportive, but inhibiting to the intellectual development of its clients. By providing all services in situ it provided an effective barrier between the sheltered world of the centre and the harsher world outside. It also maintained a client/staff relationship, in which staff would be expected to anticipate and cater for the needs of their clients. When it became evident that a new day centre was required in Harefield to serve the increasing number of young people with disabilities who could not be accommodated at Highfield Hall, it was an opportunity to offer a new model of provision which reflected the change in climate.

An Innovative Centre

In April 1983 Milton Road Day Centre was opened in Harefield. It had been a lengthy and painful period of preparation before the building was ready for its new occupants. Symons (1981) indicates the value of working collaboratively with architects when planning a building to suit a specific philosophy of day care provision. It seemed extraordinary, therefore, that there was no consistent consultation and collaboration with people with disabilities which could have avoided some of the more costly and frustrating mistakes. The kitchen, for example, although described as a training kitchen for people with disabilities to learn to develop new skills, was designed with cupboards too high for all but the tallest staff to reach, and units which no wheelchairs could get under. This kitchen, furthermore, was very small and cramped, so that it became crowded when more than two wheelchairs were inside which eliminated the concept of co-operative cooking within a group. In contrast, the architect had designed a huge open-plan sitting/dining room with kitchen adjoining, where it was assumed

meals would be served by staff in the traditional pattern. The whole philosophy of the centre was against staff running the daily programme, so the members in wheelchairs had to work within a canteen kitchen behind a tall serving hatch, which was awkward for access. The huge dining room was alien to the domestic context which Milton Road staff had wanted to provide. Unfortunately, the architect had started work on the building, without the consultation of someone in a wheelchair who was going to be using the facilities and without the staff whose philosophy would influence its development. By the time the officer-in-charge and her deputy were appointed, it was too late to alter the building in progress. Consequently, there were certain aspects, like the vast expanse of open-plan ceiling which echoed sound and prevented privacy, which they had to adapt to as best they could, and others, like the hopeless kitchen accommodation, which they had to redesign at considerable inconvenience and expense.

A New Philosophy

There was a lesson to be learned here when creating a new space to serve a changed philosophy. The complexities of appointing senior staff and planning with potential members before a building is created are obviously considerable, but a changed philosophy necessitates a different use of space and the significance of the environment must not be overlooked. Money was wasted in this venture, by the inclusion of well-equipped hairdressing, laundry, craft and pottery rooms, all of which were absolutely in accordance with the philosophy of a traditional centre like Highfield Hall but were quite inappropiate for an innovative centre like Milton Road. This misunderstanding of needs has unfortunate consequences as staff at Milton Road would experience criticisms for not using their beautiful new

facilities, when they had not requested them in the first place and would have preferred alternative resources.

Milton Road Centre opened with a radically new approach to the client . He or she was to be called a member as an indication of the role which she/he was to play. Decisions were to be made by the member as to what goals to set and how they might be fulfilled. It was then to be the role of staff to support the members in achieving their goals. In this changed emphasis, the onus was placed upon the members to direct their own lives. This presented an exhilarating challenge to young members, coming in straight from Hillcroft School, where their school-leavers programme had included a preparation for independent living. It was a daunting prospect for some older members, however, who had transferred from Highfield Hall, having spent years within a traditional model. Taking responsibility for your own decisions, and accepting the mistakes as well as the successes can be un-nerving, as Will Bee (1985) recognised. Staff at Milton Road had to be sensitive to these needs and support the members through what, for many of them, was a difficult process of self-discovery. Starting a new approach inside a new building with new staff had released them from the shackles of working within an established pattern.

Milton Road shared the advantage of being a new institution with Spencer College, and both were to develop a cohesive institutional policy as a result. Both officer-in-charge and deputy had a clear concept of the way they wanted the centre to work and were able to recruit staff on the basis of this policy. They were in a position to select members from the traditional centre, Highfield Hall, who were eager to change to a different model and were responsive to the ideas embodied in the new model. This offered a choice to people at Highfield Hall, and

those who selected Milton Road were committed enthusiasts. They were able to attract young people who had been unwilling to attend Highfield Hall because it seemed to offer provision more suited to older people. Of paramount importance was the deliberate lack of framework within the centre. No contract work was to be undertaken and no teaching programme laid on for the occupants. Members were to initiate their own programmes to suit their specific needs, as they perceived them, and if they sought educational or recreational provision it was to be found outside in the community. Milton Road placed great responsibility upon its members. They had to take turns to chair weekly meetings between the whole community of staff and members. Staff never took a dominant role within these meetings and I was most impressed with the one I attended by the way in which a fairly inarticulate member was supported in her role as Chair and gained in confidence as a result.

A fundamental aspect of this approach was the use of a key worker , a member of staff attached to each member of the community of Milton Road. The key worker helped the member to achieve objectives and to monitor their progress, acting as a special friend in their development. This was obviously a great improvement on the impersonal staff/client model, where any member of staff directs any client as part of that custodial relationship. However, over the period in which I was liaison lecturer at Fraser College, I observed weaknesses within this model. In order to operate most effectively such a system required continuity and consistency. It was, after all, an objectives approach which commanded the degree of monitoring which any behavioural method necessitates. It was also a system which required a development of trust and commitment between staff and members. Some people who had previously been used to a

dependent status, where they had grown accustomed to a passive role, were being encouraged to take considerable risks and needed the support of the key worker as a safety net . I was able to observe the distress and disappointment of members when staff who they had grown very fond of left for other posts. Of course, people who work in social services are as likely as any others to seek promotion and to be mobile in their careers. Yet, when the role of key worker is so important to the member concerned, this very mobility creates significant problems. I observed that some members grew disheartened and lost the impetus which they had started with, whilst others learned to cope by themselves. If such an approach leads to increased independance, then it has obviously fulfilled its aims. However, within my experience, it was only those members who were forceful, determined personalities who gained a real degree of independence. Some members remained passive and dependent, despite the best efforts of staff. Where Milton Road was to create a wider influence than that on its internal structure was in its effect on Highfield Hall and on borough educational provision. I offer it as an example of integration in the community which had reverberations throughout the borough and in the lives of those people who made up its population.

When Milton Road was being built, it was assumed by staff and clients at Highfield Hall that the old hut, in which they had been inadequately housed for so many years, would be closed down and they would all be transferred to Milton Road. It was not to develop, however, both because there were insufficient spaces for all the population of Highfield Hall in addition to recent school leavers, and because the new philosophy would not suit all clients from the traditional model. In the event, the officer-in-charge of Highfield Hall resigned and a new, much younger

woman took her place. She was responsive to the new philosophy and was enthusiastic towards the changes taking place at Milton Road. Sensitive to the disappointment which many clients felt in being left behind within the traditional model, she sought to create a more exciting and outward-looking atmosphere while sustaining the stability and strengths of the old system. Links with Milton Road and with the local educational and recreational resources were established, and the hut was redecorated, the garden restocked and the workshop-framework replaced by small group activities.

Residential Provision

I have been examining local authority initiatives in Harefield for people with disabilities, yet the changes taking place in a local voluntary aided provision are also directly relevant. Grasswick College is a residential college of further education for students with physical disabilities. It is sited in the neighbouring borough to Harefield, and until the mid-1980s was run by the Children's Society. It had developed from a residential school for children with physical handicaps, but of all abilities, to a residential college of further education for students aged from 16 to 19, with complex disabilities. This meant that all the students who attended Grasswick were assessed as having additional learning problems, emotional difficulties or sensory impairments. The curriculum had been radically altered to cater for the change in population so the traditional academic diet which had been appropriate for the children who attended the school had been replaced by a programme which developed independent living skills and community participation. In keeping with this curriculum initiative, the Children's Society decided to provide domestic, residential accommodation within the community as a stepping stone between the comparative seclusion

of Grasswick College and the harsh reality of independent living.

The Children's Society opened a new hostel, Waterloo House, in the Borough of Harefield, in June 1983. It had been adapted from a former day nursery in a large victorian house, and was designed to offer young people with physical handicaps an opportunity for independence within the community. As it was a sprawling house, on three floors, many modifications were made: a lift put in to give access to the first floor (staff lived in the top floor), special toilet and shower facilities installed, and kitchens adapted to accommodate wheelchairs. There was one large flat downstairs, largely for the more dependent young people and for newcomers, while there were two flats upstairs, where the young people were expected to cope with their own housekeeping and work as a unit, with three in a flat. To ease the transition, staff at Grasswick had prepared their students carefully for the progression to Waterloo House, training them in basic household skills and assessing their level of self-care. Nevertheless, the staff at Grasswick appreciated that it was a big step for some of their students to learn to live with their peers rather than being supported by care staff, to cope with their own budgetting, shopping, cooking and health-care, without recourse to the college canteen, and to wash clothes and choose what to wear each day, without the direction of staff.

Community Living

Shearer (1982) describes the complexities and frustrations of living in the community when you have severe physical disabilities. She cites the example of a couple living in Harefield who are both highly intelligent, motivated and independent, but nonetheless experience considerable difficulties in coping with all the problems which form barriers to living in the community. Whilst the transition from special college to

hostel would seem gentle in comparison to coping unaided in the community, it nevertheless offers formidable problems for some individuals. The young people at Waterloo House were expected to work as a unit in sharing chores and developing a social life for themselves. They were encouraged to look to the community for educational and recreational activities, and were supported by transport where necessary. They lived close enough to shops and Post Office to be able to get there with minimal assistance, even allowing for coping in a wheelchair up the steep hill on which the hostel was placed.

Where they experienced difficulties within the system was in the very innovation which presented problems at Milton Road. As in the day centre, Waterloo House used Key Workers to work with residents in supporting them in achieving their objectives. There were regular case conferences at which residents discussed their progress with key worker, senior staff and parents if possible. The responsibility of making decisions, selecting outside activities, and maintaining a domestic routine was complicated by the regular turn-over of staff. This was even more disturbing to the young residents of Waterloo House than it had been to members at Milton Road, as this provision was residential and these young people were often living many miles from their families. It has to be remembered that the majority of the residents of Waterloo House were coming there from Grasswick College, which specifically catered for students with complex disabilities. Many of them had problems with basic numeracy and literacy which made daily living skills complicated and hazardous. Among these residents, several had quite severe emotional disturbance and required mature and consistent support. Instead they had a high turn-over of young, inexperienced and often ill-qualified staff. Brown (1985) suggests that this is a

familiar but disasterous situation in such residential provision. It is undoubtedly difficult to find and keep reliable and qualified staff in what is an ill-paid and unsocial-houred job. However, in regard to the needs of these young people, stable and mature staff to steer them in the right course and comfort them when experiences are unsatisfactory would seem essential. Bee (1985) emphasises how painful it is for people with disabilities to gain independence and then experience failure. I was aware of the anxieties which residents at Waterloo House faced when preparing for their case conferences if, for example, they had not kept to a strict diet or were not being sufficiently sociable. It seemed to me that they almost had to be more successful and single-minded than an able-bodied young person, simply because of their disability. They were being penalised for their deficiencies (Oliver, 1986).

The new initiatives in Harefield were to have a significant impact on curriculum developments at Fraser College. Both Milton Road staff and Waterloo House staff encouraged their members to apply for course provision at Fraser College, as this was part of their philosophy of integration in the community. Highfield Hall was soon to follow. The results of this liaison were to effect both curriculum and flexibility of provision. Many of these students, especially the more mature and frail members, sought part-time provision only. The philosophy of the day centre and the hostel was to influence the curriculum at Fraser College, as an emphasis upon independent living skills and community participation became central issues. An understanding of the relationship between Fraser College and the community it served illustrates the complexities which it faced in providing appropriate responses in relation to its ethos and status.

SECTION IV

INTEGRATING STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES INTO A COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION, 1983 - 1986

Chapter 14

LIAISON IN THE COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY JANUARY TO JULY 1983

Section Four evolves from the situation I describe in Section Three, in that the character of the Borough of Harefield, the development of integration schemes and the model of integration adopted, the nature of Fraser College and borough initiatives for people with disabilities, all directly influence the development of the integration scheme in the college, from 1983 to 1986. The pilot project, which I describe in Chapter 12, obviously has particular relevance for the developments which are to follow as I inherited this situation, with all its preceding dramas, when I came into the post of liaison officer in January 1983.

Where Section Four significantly differs from Section Three is in its perspective and influences. The incidents and developments I describe in Section Three have been compiled from reports, documents and interviews. The pilot project, although a vital item in the case study, was not part of my experience as participant-observer. In Section Four I describe what I observed and recorded on the job, from 1983 to 1986, cataloguing my daily experiences and developments as I perceived them. I was not instrumental in precipitating any incidents which I record in Section Three, whereas it is undeniable that my role as liasion officer meant that I had a significant influence on the developments described in Section Four. I am not just recording, but creating action. Not all of Section Four is part of my direct experience, however, as I felt it appropriate to record parallel developments in Harefield for students with special needs. Therefore, I discuss the development of a new community college, Spencer College, opened in September 1983, the closure of the Community Unit's Training Workshop and growth of

integration in Harefield's Youth Training Scheme.

In Chapter 14 I describe what I found when I took up my post at Fraser College, the difficulties of transferring from a special school to further education college, the process of developing outside links, coping with college politics and adapting to inappropriate curriculum provision. I discuss the development of a bridging course within one specific department and the inclusion of part-time students with their subsequent progress.

Taking Over

When I took up my post as liaison officer at Fraser College in January 1983, the integration scheme was at its lowest ebb. Only two students with disabilities were returning into the Spring term, the two welfare assistants were under-occupied and therefore unhappy, NATFHE were still campaigning for improved conditions, and, within the LEA, there were rumours of disbanding the scheme as it appeared to be no longer viable. This unprepossessing beginning proved to have both advantages and disadvantages. One advantage was that I could only improve the situation. It could hardly have reached a worse stage. The disadvantage was that the disintegration of the scheme appeared to justify institutional and borough inertia. No college policy on integration was published until Autumn 1983 and responsibility for resourcing the bridging course was shifted from LEA to college and back again, without result. When, after a year's struggle, I asked the vice-principal why resources had not been forthcoming, he suggested that it was because both college and borough thought the course was unlikely to survive. The LEAs loss of confidence vitiated the progress of the scheme to integrate students with special needs into Fraser College. A policy of commitment and clarity to effect the process of

integration was urgently needed.

With no such policy to guide me, I was anxious to form relationships within Fraser College which could be of long-term benefit to the students whose needs I was to serve. Many staff were not unreasonably sceptical and unwilling to become involved, so I had to approach them with some tact. Staff at Hillcroft were still angry and confused about the debacle of the Autumn term, and feared that all the staff at Fraser College were callous and indifferent to the needs of their pupils. There was a noticeable reluctance to expose any pupils from Hillcroft to the distress their predecessors suffered. In January, 1983, I was one of three new members of staff starting at Fraser College. I took responsibility for students with disabilities. Sue James became training workshop manager. Clare Todd became head of the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry. These appointments were to play significant roles in the development of the integration scheme. It was to be expected that I should play a central role in developing the scheme, but the fact that I was to be dependent on the position of other colleagues is important. It demonstrates the weakness and vulnerability of an educational development which relied on imponderables such as individual good-will rather than a whole-college policy.

Coping with Change

To illustrate the contrast between the world of the special school and the technical college, I will describe the experiences of a school-leaver from Hillcroft. I was in a position to observe Peter, a sixteen year old with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, at first, in the school-leavers' class at Hillcroft during the autumn term of 1982, when I was his form teacher, then to follow him through part-time integration at Fraser College, in the Spring Term of 1983, when I had taken up

my appointment there. On 20th January, 1983, I recorded Peter's first experience of Fraser College and made observation on his behaviour, as I perceived it:

> ..At school, he stood out from the group as an adult, a mature, witty and articulate individual. He would not be made to engage in any activities he disliked, like PE or physiotherapy. He is physically lazy and unwilling to exert himself. In the special school setting, where there are easy ramps, wide corridors, and a short journey through the playground from the coach that delivers him to his classroom, this lack of practice at exerting himself doesn't matter. He can still cope, with the minimum of physical effort.
>
> In Fraser College, Peter found the task of making his way around the building far more arduous. Ramps were much steeper than in Hillcroft, distances further, doors heavier and paths more treacherous. He almost tipped himself out of his wheelchair on his first day, trying to negotiate his way around the potholes in the car park. His lack of stamina and poor level of fitness made him quickly breathless. As well as the more gruelling physical endurance which the college environment imposed, there were daily embarrassments and humiliations which Peter would never have experienced at Hillcroft. The special school was entirely on ground floor level, with ease of access to every area, including Head's office, classrooms, toilets, hall and playground. It wasn't possible for Peter to go into the main entrance to Fraser College, with his peers. There were fifteen stone steps preventing access. Instead, he had to go through one of the very heavy fire doors in the side entrances, which necessitated assistance. In January 1983 there was still much of the building which was inaccessible. Those floors which were accessible could only be reached by Peter queuing to use one of the only two lifts in the tower block, and then having a long journey along corridors with heavy fire doors.
> Peter was coming from an accessible environment where he was comfortable, secure and independent: he found himself in a hostile environment, where physical constraints created dependence. Peter visibly altered from a confident young adult to a highly vulnerable boy. (diary 20 January 1983).

It was because I knew Peter at school that I could appreciate the contrast. It made me reflect upon the detrimental effect which an inaccessible and difficult environment can have. It had actually taken independence away from an independent young man, and created insecurity for him. As my own diary notes, quoted in the introductory section, indicate, I was nervous and anxious myself, finding the change from Hillcroft School to Fraser

College fairly intimidating. My senior status in the small school had been denegrated to a lowly status within the college hierarchy. When the environment is so unfriendly it contributes to the integrated minority's feeling their minority status. The vocal majority would not accept such adverse conditions: the incoming minority are expected to tolerate them.

In a more positive vein, Peter was well served by the class which Fraser College offered him. He was eager to study computer programming, having started working with computers at Hillcroft. A sympathetic teacher, Jim Shaw (who later proved to be a great asset to the Bridging Course) accepted Peter into his weekly class, and he was treated as an equal member of the group. Peter came every Tuesday morning to attend his class, and returned to Hillcroft in the afternoon. He was well motivated as he found the subject matter very exciting and he rarely missed a session. When he returned to Hillcroft in the afternoon, he was eager to talk to staff and pupils about his interesting time at Fraser College. Peter's successful part-time integration was a valuable means of helping to counteract at Hillcroft the bad publicity of the previous term, and show staff and pupils there that Fraser College could be fun, and educationally rewarding.

Extending Links

Just as I found that chance appointments were to influence the course of integration at Fraser College, so chance meeting were to effect the composition of the student group. At a Saturday conference in a special school in November 1982 I met a teacher from Grasswick College, and we discussed our respective jobs. When I told her of my post at Fraser College, she expressed great interest and told me that she taught two boys from Grasswick who would benefit from the stimulus of weekly integrated art classes. As I have described, Grasswick College

was a residential college in the neighbouring borough which accommodated about forty students with physical disabilities, additional learning problems, and sometimes emotional difficulties. As many of the students at Grasswick had complex handicaps, like spina bifida and hydrocephalus, or cerebral palsy, the educational programme combined an emphasis on Social and Life Skills and practical training in independent living. Art was taught in Fraser College within the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry, so I talked to both the Art teachers and the Head of Department, Clare Todd. They were all willing to co-operate but the practical details were considerable. The art rooms were situated on the inaccessable second floor of the main building and both prospective students were in wheelchairs. I decided that I would first ask Sue James, training workshop manager, if she had vacancies for two boys in her art classes. I knew that the workshop had excellent art facilities and was situated on the ground floor, with a ramp at the entrance. I considered that we could integrate the students into the training workshop where the staff were appropriately trained and the work suitable for the particular problems of these students.

Political Intervention

The reaction of the senior lecturer in charge of the Unit to Sue James's request that two boys in wheelchairs join her workshop for art classes indicates the complexities which bedevilled the progress of integration. It seems bizarre that, as manager, Sue should have needed to ask permission to make decisions concerning her workshop, yet the turbulent history of the Unit created considerable tension for her. The post of senior lecturer in charge of the Unit which fell vacant on the secondment of John Cook, passed to Maggie Major, a committed NATFHE member and an articulate opponent of management. She

regarded Sue James as a spy of management's and she made life at the workshop very difficult for her. Maggie insisted that Sue, as her subordinate, asked her permission, as head of the Unit, before any decision concerning the workshop could be made. When Sue asked her if the boys could come to art sessions, Maggie replied:

What's in it for us?

She wanted to know the department from which they were coming, so that she could ask a favour of that department in return. she also suggested that there might be a political gain in displaying co-operation. Should the boys be considered, she insisted that they would first have to come for interview to be assessed, like all their other unit students. Welfare support was also considered essential - without any attempt to discover the students' level of dependence - simply because the boys were in wheelchairs. Such was the resistance to the notion of accommodating students in wheelchairs, that Sue James reluctantly withdrew her offer of help.

Reflecting on Attitudes

I find it interesting to compare my initial reaction to this situation in January 1983 with my reflections in 1986. Then I had recently arrived in Fraser College, after some years working in special schools, so I was in the process of being integrated myself. I was politically naive and absorbed in the needs of my students to the exclusion of all else. The complex and oppressive history of special needs provision in Fraser College was unfamiliar to me, and I was heavily influenced by management propaganda directed against what they termed NATFHE Activists. In January 1983 I regarded Maggie Major's attitude as unreasonable:

..a patronising of the disabled seems all that is

> evident in the constant emphasis on lift and sluice, and a totally subjective use of their entry to college as a political tussle..this is supposed to be the caring reaction of people who take political stands only in the interests of the disabled students..in the light of their behaviour this motive maybe questioned.. (diary January 1983).

In 1986 I take a different view, having gained more insight into their history and into management and borough incompetence. The What's in it for us? attitude reflects the disparate, competitive inter-departmental rivalries which characterised Fraser College at that time. As the Unit had low status within the college, it needed to fight more fiercely that most departments to survive. When Maggie Major insisted on welfare support, she was expressing the lack of confidence which unit staff felt towards management after the disastrous pilot scheme of 1981-2. She was one of the staff who carried students in wheelchairs up stone steps and had to cope with inadequate toilet facilities. As physical conditions were grossly inadequate then, she made specific demands before any other commitment forced her staff into difficult compromises. The insistence on interview and formal assessment was to treat the disabled students like all our other students (Maggie Major, 1983). I think this was a careful and reasonable response to what happened in the academic year 1982-3. The progress of Terry and Michael clearly illustrates the reason for discontent among unit staff.

Adapting to Provision

When Terry and Michael started in the Autumn term of 1982 they wanted to study for a BEC (Business Education Council) General Diploma. Fraser College did not offer this course, but only the more demanding BEC National. As there were no suitable alternatives, the boys reluctantly opted for this course. It was to prove fraught with obstacles. The three-week exclusion at the beginning of term meant that they missed the early stages of the

intensive course. NATFHE hostility meant that some of their teachers refused to give them notes to make up the work they missed. Some of their fellow students also refused to lend them notes which served to isolate them within the class. They were trying to cope with a course which was not of their choosing, and so lacked the motivation needed to sustain them. What made them different from everyone else was that they had been allowed onto a course without the pre-course conditions required by all other students. It was a popular course, but O level maths was an essential pre-requisite, and several students from the unit had wanted to progress to it but not been allowed because of their lack of this qualification. Terry and Michael were accepted for the course without even a grade in CSE maths. The insistence of Maggie Major on formal assessment for all students, disabled or not, must be viewed in this light.

> ..physically handicapped students were being made into special cases for entry into the BEC National Course. Students from the Unit with 3 O levels have been denied entry because the course was said to be too exacting, yet the students from the special school were offered places with only a few CSEs. As a consequence, a sense of injustice was felt by staff and students of the Unit.. (Minutes of Meeting of NATFHE, Unit staff, Welfare staff, disabled student, member of local Disablement Association, and self. 11th November 1982).

Unit staff were naturally committed to the needs of their students so that, seeing a specific group being selected for preferential treatment, strengthened their prejudice against the integration scheme. They made it clear that they saw this a token integration, lacking understanding of needs.

The outcome for Terry and Michael was that they were unable to keep up with the work of the rest of the class. The lecturers became frustrated and bewildered, as they had been told by management that these disabled students were bright and intelligent. This ignored the limitations of their special

school curriculum, long hospital stays, and the educational implications of spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Some of their classmates resented the time that the lecturer had to give to answering Terry and Michael's questions. There was then some cruel teasing, and public taunting of the boys for their ignorance. Making an exception for these students, simply because they were disabled, was no kindness to them. They both failed to complete the course, having to drop out of essential modules like Statistics and Data Processing through lack of previous qualifications. This might have left them demoralised and depressed. Fortunately, Terry was resilient. He was able to gain a place on a YTS scheme in Harefield and progressed to a clerical post in the Council. Michael wanted to continue as a student at Fraser College, despite his unfortunate first year, and opted to be a student in the first year on the Bridging Course.

The Bridging Course

The Bridging Course, planned to start in September 1982, was eventually ready in time for the commencement of the Autumn term of 1983-4. The initiation of the course illustrates the irregular and erratic pattern which has characterised the scheme. Clare Todd, head of the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry, had a son who was partially-hearing and had moderate learning difficulties. He had received his education in a special school, so she was familiar with and sympathetic to special educational needs. Indeed, it seems unlikely that a Bridging Course would have developed at all had Clare Todd not started at Fraser College in January 1983. This fortuitous happening is typical of the unpredictable way in which integration at Fraser College had progressed. Students were recruited on chance encounters, staff cajoled into assimilating

them, and course provision devised on the strength of an individual's goodwill. It was because Clare Todd expressed interest in running the Bridging Course that it became a course offered in the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry. There was no rationale, other than her particular interest, for placing it there.

Restricting Resources

Placing special needs provision exclusively in one department had several disadvantages. It restricted the choice of subjects offered, as they had to be those which already existed in the department. Therefore, Floristry, Art and Cookery were available, but Woodwork, Computer Skills, and Electronics were not. this was obviously limiting for the students. It restricted the range of lecturers who would work on the course. They had to be largely recruited from within the department, as it was complicated to buy in staff from other departments. This latter restriction meant that some lecturers who were reluctant to work with these students were forced to accept teaching commitments on the course. There were other lecturers who were very interested in teaching these students, but lacked the opportunity. Through the three years in which I was course tutor, I found that those lecturers who were interested were able to develop the students' potential substantially. The practice of those lecturers who were forced into this area of teachin against their will was generally detrimental to the students, i that it emphasised weaknesses rather that strengths. M experience at Fraser College bore out Biklen's (1985) recognitio of the need to maximise the commitment of enthusiasts.

Perhaps the most inhibiting feature of this model was tha it rested responsibility within one department rather than withi the whole institution. This allowed the rest of the college t

ignore the educational needs of these students. It restricted progression within the college and beyond. Significantly, it was the only woman head of department in the college who took on these students, and she had sympathy with the scheme because of her own experiences with her son. Other heads of department were not interested in accommodating a low-level course which held poor status. The whole procedure relied on goodwill, rather than professional assessment of the needs of these students and resources required to run the course adequately.

Part-time Students

Through the link with Grasswick College and Hillcroft School, as well as Terry and Michael being full-time students, there were six part-time students attending integrated classes between January and June 1983. A head teacher from the neighbouring LEA rang to ask for Building classes for one boy from her school, as there was no Building Department in her local further education college. This boy was enrolled in a link course which already existed between the college and a local comprehensive. He progressed satisfactorily, apart from his unreliable attendance. What I found particularly interesting was the chance this arrangement offered him to lose a label at Fraser College. Although he was attending a school for maladjusted children in his home borough, he presented no behaviour problems to his lecturers at College.

Peter's progress in his computer class has already been described. He was to progress from this period of part-time integration into the 1983-4 Bridging Course, then on to a two-year Electronics and Computing Course in the Engineering Department. January 1983 was to be the beginning of his three and a half year stay at Fraser College. Peter is an exceptional example of a student who was able to progress within the College

from the Bridging Course. The remaining five students who attended part-time from January to June 1983 were all from Grasswick College. As Table 10 indicates, none of these students had previous academic qualifications, and all had complex disabilities with additional special educational needs. Progression to academic or vocational courses would have been both unrealistic and inappropriate for them. Staff at Grasswick College were primarily interested in extending the experiences of these students through integration. In all five cases, they were integrated into classes in the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry, with no consideration given to possible integration in other areas of the college.

Art classes were still being sought for James and Tom, the two boys for whom provision had been requested in the training workshop. They were able to reach rooms on the second floor of the main building by pushing themselves across the link which joined the tower block to the main building. They were then able to join trainee nursery nurses in their weekly two hour art class. This was a very fruitful experience for them, despite the considerable physical complications it had involved:

> ..technicians were directed to move equipment used by the hairdressers from the second to the third floor, and to bring art equipment down from the third to the second floor..(diary, February 1983).

Mentioning such moving of furniture may seem trivial, but without the full support of someone in Clare Todd's position, it is unlikely that I would have gained the full co-operation of technicians. My lack of status within the institution meant that I had to rely on the support of people in senior posts rather than being in a position to initiate change myself.

It was arranged with Grasswick that Carol and Clare could attend Floristry classes once a week, as staff had felt that they

Table 10

STUDENTS ATTENDING PART TIME: JAN - JUNE 1983

Student	Disability	Qualifications	Background	Progress
Peter	spina bifida (wheelchair)	3 CSEs (grade 4)	day special school	Bridging course
James	spina bifida (wheelchair)	none	residential special college	day centre
Tom	quadreplegic cerebral palsy (wheelchair)	none	residential special college	O level Art at Tottenham College
Carol	hemiplegic cerebral palsy	none	residential special college	part-time on Bridging course
Clare	hemiplegic cerebral palsy	none	residential special college	part-time on Bridging course
Jo	maladjusted	none	day special school	unemployed
George	quadreplegic cerebral palsy (wheelchair)	none	residential special college	no more part-time attendance

Student	Subject	Department
Peter	Computers	Engineering Department
James	Art	Health, Hairdressing & Floristry
Tom	Art	Health, Hairdressing & Floristry
Carol	Floristry	Health, Hairdressing & Floristry
Clare	Floristry	Health, Hairdressing & Floristry
Jo	Brick-laying	Department of Building
George	Horticulture	Health, Hairdressing & Floristry

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would benefit from integration into a class which interested them. The girls were mobile and able to sit up on the high stools used in the Floristry classes. The lecturer who taught the class and was in charge of Floristry, Sandy Green, was both

interested in the special needs area of work and had gained previous experience of young people with complex disabilities. This was important because it meant that Sandy had realistic expectations, was tolerant of slow progression and restricted literacy skills, and respected the girls' dignity. She arranged for Clare to work with one floristry student and Carol with another. In realising that the two girls needed considerable support and guidance, she showed sensitivity to her full-time floristry students by devising a weekly rota by which there would never be any one student whose work was significantly impeded by assisting the girls. Sandy accepted Carol and Clare and enabled them to participate fruitfully in the group work. Although the full-time florists had a tight schedule to complete, they never resented the girls as Sandy ensured equality of participation.

George, perhaps the most severely handicapped of the five students from Grasswick, attended Horticulture classes. He was fond of gardening and belonged to the Garden Club at Grasswick. He wanted to learn some practical gardening skills, within his physical limitations. He had spastic quadreplegia, and his hands shook when he tried to grasp anything. George was a recent immigrant from Vietnam with limited understanding and use of English. His experiences at Fraser College were an example of a mismatch of objectives. While he needed practical emphasis with maximum support, the lecturer concentrated upon theory and was unable to cope with his needs. He had a welfare assistant in class to help him, but this served only to isolate him from the rest of the group.

Assessing Integration

There were both advantages and disadvantages in the level of integration experienced during this Spring and Summer term of 1983. The advantage of extending the general understanding of

what disability could entail was to evolve as the college was now integrating students who had mobility problem but were not in wheelchairs. Differentiating degrees of dependency may seem pedantic, but I felt staff and student of Fraser College had concentrated upon a stereotype of disability: a wheelchair. This had prevented many people from looking at the individuals and their particular needs, but rather at the chair and so fire risks, toilet arrangements, bench heights and access take priority over the other personal and academic needs of the student. I knew from my experience that only 60% of pupils in Hillcroft School were in wheelchairs and that many other children could walk with varying degrees of difficulty. I felt that a distorted fixation upon this narrow stereotype inhibited integration in the college.

A disadvantage of the integration of this period was lack of progression. While the students were being taken into classes, they were neither appropriately qualified nor selected for the course. So Peter could join the Computer class part-time but needed more maths experience to gain full entry to the course. Joe, who came for Building sessions, was good at brick-laying but would not be accepted on the course without higher literacy. James and Tom could cope in art classes but were not following the Nursery Nursing course, and were put in with floristry students when the nursery nurses went out on several weeks' placement. Carol and Clare enjoyed their floristry classes but were not able to train as full-time florists, as this demanded high physical stamina and the academic ability to cope with theoretical examinations.

Whilst I recognise that these students were coming for both recreational and educational purposes, the lack of progression displays the gap in lower rungs which made the jump from Bridging

TABLE 11

STUDENTS ATTENDING FULL TIME 1982-1983

student	disability	qualifications	background	progress
Terry	spina bifida (wheelchair)	4 CSEs	Hillcroft school and residential college dropped out of Bec. N.	Office council employment
Michael	Duchenne muscular dystrophy (wheelchair)	5 CSEs	Hillcroft school	dropped out of Bec N.Bridging Course
John	Duchenne muscular dystrophy (wheelchair)	8 O levels	integrated into Newcross Comprehensive	dropped out of A levels (after one month)
Stephen	Duchenne muscular dystrophy (wheelchair)	1 CSE	Hillcroft school	dropped out (after one term

N.B. all 4 dropped out of the courses they enrolled on.

course to progression in the College so difficult. The Table of Student Attendance 1982-1983 (Table 11) show that the full-time students had all dropped out of their courses by end of that academic year. This suggests that some form of Bridging Course was essential. The Table of Part-time Student Attendance from January to June, 1983, (table 10) points to a potential target group for inclusion within the college but which necessitated a commitment to community participation, and curriculum modification.

TABLE 12

FULL TIME STUDENTS ATTENDING BRIDGING COURSE 1983-1984.

name	disability	qualifications	background	progress
Michael (17)	Duchenne muscular dystrophy	CSEs in 1982: English Grade 1 Biology " 2 History " 2 Typing " 3 Art " 4	started in mainstream Infant School Transferred at 9 years, to PH Special School	to C&G course in Engineering Department
Peter (16)	spina bifida & hydroceph-alus	CSEs in 1983: English Grade 4 History " 4 Biology " 4 Typing " 4	PH day Special School	to same C&G course as Michael
Susan (17)	spina bifida & hydroceph-alus	no CSEs taken	PH residential special school	to YTS/ dropped out attendance at hostel

O level exam results at end of 1984 academic year:

Michael: science C, English C, maths F.
Peter : science F, English F, maths F.
Susan : no exams taken.

Chapter 15

THE FIRST YEAR OF A BRIDGING COURSE: September 1983-July 1984.

In this chapter I will describe the impact of the completion of those improvements requested by NATFHE, the growth of the Bridging Course, progress of students on the course, recruitment of lecturers and teaching approaches. A pattern of chance developments, unplanned courses, with a lack of long-term resource and staff training implications illustrates the unsatisfactory nature of developing programmes without policy guide-lines.

Exactly two years after the beginning of the pilot scheme, both the physical and curriculum changes deemed necessary in Fraser College were ready. An external lift was built in the main building to give access to all floors for students in wheelchairs. All entrances to college buildings were ramped except the main entrance up a flight of fifteen stone steps, which the planners had considered too steep to ramp. A special needs suite had been built, out of a former classroom in the tower block, where Environment Health and Safety had been taught. The suite consisted of three small rooms: my office, the two welfare assistants' room and a toilet, sluice and changing room for students with physical handicaps. The Bridging Course began in September 1983, with only three full-time students: Michael with Duchenne muscular dystrophy who had dropped out of his BEC National course in 1982-3; Peter, with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, who had been attending Fraser College part-time in the Spring and Summer terms of 1983; and Susan with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, starting life at Fraser College and Waterloo House, having come from a residential special school (Table 12).

When the course had been conceived, it was intended to be integrated, with students from special schools making up only a

third of the total: five out of a group of fifteen had been proposed. I had been sceptical about where the other students would come from but been assured that there was a need for O level course provision in further education. The Model of 'O' level and general studies had been adopted by the Working Party, in preference to the bolder - and more relevant - pre-vocational model offered by John Cook. The Bridging Course offered O level Maths, English, Science and Art, as well as general education options: Cookery, Floristry, Needlework, PE, Music and Drama.

The Effect of Improvements

In relation to the prolonged stress, frustration and anxiety caused by the ill-managed pilot scheme, the completion of those required modifications and facilities which NATFHE had insisted be done, appeared as positive improvements. As liaison lecturer, I could not fail to be relieved when essential toilet facilities, lifts to most of the building, welfare support area and course provision were designed to accommodate students and staff with disabilities. However, within a few months of experiencing these improvements, I recognised that basic errors had been made which were to present long-term barriers to a level of participation commensurate with integration.

The special needs suite, comfortable through it was, presented a segregating device in itself. It was placed some distance from the student common room, the library and canteen, all areas which might facilitate integration. Instead, it had been placed in the middle of the most prestigious section of the Department of Environmental Health and Science. In the corridor where the suite was located were classrooms where Environmental Health Officers were being trained. While they proved to be extremely agreeable neighbours, they had little in common with students on the Bridging Course. They were mature students,

often post-graduates, who were combining theoretical work with outside site visits, so the corridor was sometimes empty. Had the suite been in an area of the college where students on a range of courses gathered, social integration would have been more likely. It was on the third floor of the tower block and there were delays while students in wheelchairs waited in crowded queues for the two lifts. It could be up to twenty minutes before a student in a wheelchair was able to reach the third floor by which time they were late for class. The rooms in the suite were ill-planned. My office was very pleasant but small, which could have been fine had it been only an office. However, with the acute shortage of rooms in the college, it came into use as a classroom soon after the Bridging Course started. This might have been satisfactory for three students in wheelchairs, but it was very overcrowded for six students in wheelchairs and five sitting at tables (as was the case in the 1984-5 Bridging Course). The toilet and sluice room, which had been requested as essential throughout the pilot year, was too big in relation to its use. Had the office been larger and the toilet area smaller it would have been more convenient for us all. Even allowing for the shortage of teaching accommodation, it should have been possible to have given me an office within the main building of the college, nearer the staff rooms. If special toilets and changing facilities were to be made available within the college, was there any need for a space-wasting and separate welfare room? I have described the bleak nature of the student common room, so that once this haven of a quiet room with welcoming friendship had been established, there was no way in which students who retreated to it at every free moment could be turned away. Had it not been created, and the student common room been improved,

these students would have been forced into using communal facilities.

A Special Course

A special course is a segregating provision for, although it was designed to cater for an integrated group, the Bridging Course only ever included students with disabilities. It might have been reasonable to assume that school-leavers in Harefield would want to take O levels in a course which gave priority to students with disabilities, had there been no alternative available but Spencer College opened in September 1983 to provide the lower rungs which were missing in Fraser College. It was to take over some work previously confined to adult education in Harefield, and to offer a range of O levels. Those students who wished to take O levels in a further education college thus had an ideal opportunity to do so.

Just as the physical modifications offered by Fraser College showed a lack of understanding of needs, so the curriculum provisions suggested a lack of practical and straightforward consultation. The O level facility was only going to be suitable for a few students with disabilities if curriculum developments at Hillcroft were heeded. It was because there were so few suitable CSE, let alone O level, candidates at Hillcroft that curriculum reform was under way from September 1982. Yet the move away from an academic emphasis at Hillcroft would have significant educational implications for the course provision at Fraser College. The Bridging Course was not planned with staff who taught the school-leavers at Hillcroft. It was designed to suit the needs of boys like Michael, with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, who had been selected for earlier integration into Newcross but elected not to go. He was recognised by staff at Hillcroft as being most untypical of their school-leavers both in

1983 and the forseeable future. Even Michael was not ideally integrated, for had physical modifications for students in wheelchairs been completed at Spencer College in 1983, this institution would have been a more suitable setting for him to study for O levels, in that he would have been in integrated classes rather than on a segregated course.

Although the Bridging Course had been designed as a full-time course, three full-time students hardly constituted a viable group. The relationship of Fraser College to its local community is clearly illustrated in the developments which followed. The ethos of the new day centre, Milton Road, has been described as one which looks out into the community for active participation, rather than one which seeks to provide a comprehensive provision in situ. Waterloo House, as a progressive model of residential care, is sited within the community, in traditional rather than institutional housing, and looking for participation in the local community for its residents. Grasswick College, conscious of its isolation as a special college, sought educational links in mainstream further education. Hillcroft School was engaged in an expansion of its school-leavers' programme, to include integration in mainstream further education, especially where it complimented the school curriculum. All these factors were to influence the growth and development of the Bridging Course. Requests for participation came from all these sources. Grasswick asked for five students to be included in subject areas, Waterloo House asked for two students to be included part-time, as well as accommodating a full-time student from the hostel. Milton asked for four members to attend and Hillcroft wanted two school-leavers to attend computer classes. In this liaison with the community in which we were able to offer ease of access and be responsive to local needs, student numbers on the

course rose from three to sixteen, and ranged in age from sixteen to thirty.

TABLE 13

PART TIME STUDENTS ON BRIDGING COURSE 1983-1984

name	disability	background	progress
Mary	cerebral palsy	Milton Rd Centre	V. successful
Jenny	cerebral palsy	Waterloo House	V. successful
Tom	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	V. successful
Clare	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	V. successful
Jim	neurological disorder	Hillcroft School	successful
Pam	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Waterloo House	successful
Nick	cerebellar ataxic telangietasia	Grasswick College	successful
Kate	athetoid cerebral palsy	Milton Rd. Centre	V. successful
Sam	multiple scerosis	Milton Rd. Centre	successful
Joan	hemiplegia from a stroke	Milton Rd. Centre	unsuccessful
James	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Grasswick College	successful
Carol	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	V. successful
Jane	spina bifida	Hillcroft School	V. successful

Drop-out rate: 1 out of 13 students.

(dropped out of day centre and college during period of depression.)

v. successful: progressed to increased independance; to exam course; to second year of Bridging Course attendance.

successful: maintained sufficient interest to continue to attend, despite limited progress.

Backgrounds: 4 Milton Rd day centre
5 Grasswick College
2 Waterloo House
2 Hillcroft School (the original integration link.)

While Michael, Peter and Susan were following all the components of the Course, including some options, the part-time students were enrolled for just one or two specific sessions, or

perhaps for one day a week. Those students with limited literacy and numeracy skills, who would not be able to follow the O level Maths and English courses, were catered for with a selection of Art, Drama, Music, Cookery and Floristry classes. In November 1983 I compiled a Progress Report of the Bridging Course by asking all who taught on it to write a brief report of student progress and any problems which were arising.

Progress Report

Although this was only just three months into the Course, I felt that it was better to discover problems early, rather than have staff coping with anxiety in isolation, as can happen even in the most carefully structured schemes (Harries, 1985). The educational implications of complex disabilities, such as spina bifida and hydrocephalus, were demonstrated in the comments from lecturers. The disparity between Michael's level of ability and understanding and Susan's learning difficulties is reflected in the reports:

> ..MATHS: Michael is quick to grasp new work/Susan has a problem in understanding new work and needs lots of attention and encouragement;
> SCIENCE: Michael has a better recall of previous lessons and works at a faster rate than Peter, although both are making progress in speed and concentration/Susan has been unable to do the homework and is finding the work very difficult..(Progress Report, Nov. 1983).

The majority of students attending the course part-time had complex disabilities (see Table 13). For several of them this included learning or perceptual problems which were reflected in the reports:

> ..her main difficulty seems to be in co-ordinating/I am finding it difficult to keep Jenny, Pam and Susan involved in the project..Jenny and Pam often fall asleep in the afternoon..Pam reads every word, even the full stops, and occasionally goes off on a little mental walk-about..(Progress Report, Nov. 1983).

Problems with concentration, memory, co-ordination and motivation are to be anticipated in working with young people with spina

bifida and hydrocephalus (Anderson & Clarke, 1982; Holgate, 1985). Anderson's research also indicated that these problems could be found in some young people with cerebral palsy. It was comforting for staff to discover that other lecturers were experiencing similar difficulties, as some suspected that they were alone with their problems and that it reflected their incompetent teaching performance.

One of the comments in the report reflects the dilemma for staff in teaching so disparate a group of students:

> ..the attitude and aptitude of the students is variable. They do not fit together well as a group because they have different needs..(Progress Report, Nov. 1983).

The progress report highlighted the weaknesses of the Bridging Course, and illustrated the lack of preparation which had preceded it. The students, while all physically disabled, had a wide range of different needs and skills. It was possible to group some of the Bridging Course students (Jenny, Pam and Susan, for example) in terms of their interests and abilities, but they generally presented a heterogeneous mixture. Michael enjoyed Computer classes and he and Peter joined an additional integrated Computer Studies class with engineering students once a week. Neither of the boys opted for Cookery classes. Susan dropped Science and Computer classes early in the Spring term of 1984 because she found them too difficult to follow. Jenny, although nearly twenty years old, still retained the habits and emotional dependency of a much younger child - sucking her thumb, twisting her hair into knots, retreating to the toilet for chocolate-eating binges and getting uncontrollable fits of the giggles. She was barely literate but had a colourful if bizarre verbal repertoire, which made her popular with staff and students. Kate was severely physically handicapped, unable to talk or control her constantly flailing limbs. Yet her tastes in reading were

for the poetry of T.S.Eliot, Yeats, Hardy and Wilfred Owen, and she composed her own poems. Not surprisingly, therefore, it was difficult to find a teaching method appropriate for all the students. The level of teaching which would have been appropriate for Michael or Kate would be over the heads of Susan and Jenny. It was very difficult for staff to pitch at the right level and they generally found that the Bridging Course students had to work on individual programmes. However, this was difficult to implement when they were trying to complete an O level syllabus in one academic year at the request of the students. Some lecturers found teaching on the Bridging Course much more taxing than others. This applied particularly when they had been unwillingly forced into teaching on the Course rather than enthusiastically accepting its commitment.

An Unwilling Participant

Mary Thomas was a part-time lecturer with poor health. She had been teaching students on Dentistry or Nursing Courses for some years and was used to a conventional lecture and overhead projector format with academically able students. When she was asked to include one hour a week of O level Science with the three full-time Bridging Course students she was less than enthusiastic. Apart from recognising that they were in wheel-chairs and some furniture needed shifting in the laboratory, her teaching method was exactly as usual. When she found that all three had difficulty in writing notes quickly, she offered hand outs to include gaps for them to fill. Michael was able to progress satisfactorily, as he could cope with this style of presentation. Peter found it rather more difficult and had to rely on Michael to help him. Susan was completely lost and became very confused with the level of work she was being expected to absorb. Mary Thomas was unfamiliar with young people

who had spina bifida and hydrocephalus, and regarded Susan's lack of progress as laziness. This culminated in her calling me into class one day to tell me how stupid Susan was. Such was Mary Thomas' lack of awareness of the student and her needs that she talked disparagingly of her, while Susan sat in her wheelchair between us, crying with embarrassment. Needless to say, Susan dropped the subject soon after. Whilst I was obviously angry and distressed for Susan at the time, I moderate the blame that might otherwise lie on Mary Thomas because she had been forced into a teaching commitment outside her experience or interest. In the event, she enjoyed the year's Course with the two boys, and grew fond of them. Susan presented problems which required not only appropiate teaching methods but understanding of her perceptual and spatial difficulties. It was not for lack of training or support, for I had explained the educational implications of spina bifida and Hydrocephalus to Mary and had placed one of my welfare assistants in class with Susan. As Biklen found, training staff who are not interested in integration, especially when this means curriculum change, is unproductive.

An Enthusiastic Response

As the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry did not offer Computer Studies as a subject area, a lecturer from another department was brought in to teach it on the Bridging Course. Jim Shaw was a full-time lecturer in the Engineering Department, with some seven years experience at Fraser College. He had come into teaching from industry and had received no formal teacher training. However, he enjoyed working with young people and was sensitive to their needs. He had an excellent sense of humour and flexibility of teaching method. It materialised that Computer Studies was the most popular option on the Bridging Course and there were soon a dozen students in the

class, nine part-time students joining the three full-timers. They were a more markedly heterogenous group than in other classes, because Jim refused no student. He was enthusiastic and interested in including this group in his commitments, despite the extra work involved. Michael and Peter were able to work with minimal assistance in devising computer programmes. Others in the group needed more help from Jim, but were able to write interesting computer programmes. Some were learning to master the keyboard with games of skill and accuracy, assisted by welfare assistants, Mary and Kathy. From the beginning, I worked in the classroom with Jim. This meant that the students could ask for individual help when they needed it, as there were four of us to assist.

I always offered help in the classroom, in the form of team teaching or welfare support, but some lecturers preferred to work on their own. Jim, having taken on a large group of students who needed individual support, was eager to accept help. He was also able to work quite happily with other staff, teaching us new skills as the year progressed. The atmosphere in the Computer Skills classes was always relaxed and informal, yet students worked with great concentration and enthusiasm. Whatever their level of ability, Jim found appropiate tasks for them: tasks which were within their capabilities and could, therefore, offer reward. Jim was given the same brief details on the educational implications of different handicaps distributed to all staff who taught on the Course. Where he was exceptional was in being able to perceive the need, and respond to it, without making the student aware that any allowances were being made. There was a strong group identity in Computer Skills classes, although students were working on different programmes, and at different levels. Jim treated all the students as equals and made commun-

ication relaxed and easy, even when there were members of the class with no speech, who had to talk with devices such as Cannon communicators.

Reflections on Progress

The first year of the Bridging Course was a period of learning and changing for staff involved. We learnt that we had effectively isolated ourselves in providing a special support service area and a special course - a wider perception of student needs in the institution as a whole could have avoided this position. We learnt that the curriculum was inadequate for the wide range of needs within the student group. These needs had to be met with individual programmes rather than a group approach. In the Progress Report of the first term we assessed specific learning problems which applied to several members within the group, but we also understood that disability was a meaningless term when used to define curriculum needs, and that our students demonstrated a wide range of abilities and practical skills.

As course tutor, I learnt to appreciate Biklen's findings in his research over the same period (1982-1985) that teachers cannot be made to work successfully with students with special needs. Mary Thomas illustrates the negative effect of such practice. She was placed in a position which she resisted and within which she felt ill-at-ease. Consequently, the students suffered and the experience was denegrating rather than stimulating. I learnt that lecturers like Jim Shaw were quite exceptional and to be carefully employed within the process of integration. Biklen's (1985) research concluded that enthusiastic teachers had to be used to the maximum, as they were the tools of integration. Jim was committed, sensitive, and enjoyed working with the students on the Bridging Course. He made regular visits to the special needs suite to talk to

students and treated them with the same level of consideration and good humour which he displays to all students. I wanted to use his skills to best effect by making him a central tutor within the Course, as his subject of Computer Studies was immensely popular with students. The way in which this ideal was casually thwarted within the college bureaucracy is an indicator of the lack of understanding of the integration process within the institution.

Chapter 16

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPENCER COLLEGE (1983-1986).

Chapter 16 describes the early progression of a new community college in Harefield. I discuss the operation of an Equal Opportunities Policy, a Special Needs Policy, an open access system in the multi-skills workshop, a response to the community needs in Harefield and the elaborate system of staff training. Finally, I illustrate the commitment of the principal of Spencer College to support students with special needs. Whilst I was not in a position to record developments at Spencer College in anything like the detail in which I could record those at Fraser College, I offer this example of a community college as a dramatic contrast to Fraser College and its traditional ethos. That two such different colleges co-existed in one borough is an indication of the lack of cohesion and co-operative planning which permeated borough educational provision.

History

A new community college had been planned in Harefield since 1977, when the Committee for a Second College of Further Education was formed. Its report, published in 1982, indicated that the new college was designed to compensate for the inadequacies which existed as

> ..Fraser College did not, and could not, provide adequately for the range of Harefield's further education needs.....
>
> (Borough Report, 1982)

The Committee perceived a specific area of neglect in that

> ..provision of courses at non-advanced levels for the 16-19 age group was minimal..some non-advanced work was being provided in establishments which were simply not geared up for work of that kind...
>
> (Borough Report, 1982)

Of particular concern was the ..substantial flow from all parts

of Harefield to out-Borough FE Colleges. In order to understand the ethos and image of Spencer College, which eventually opened in September 1983, it must be set in this background context. There was a clear deficit within Harefield's further education provisions. The new college was carefully and thoroughly prepared to respond to evident gaps in provision and to serve a hitherto neglected clientele. It would only cater for ..some 900 to 1,000 full-time students. and be ..mainly for the 16 to 19 year old age group... Of particular significance, in terms of its development, was the Committee's decision that ..the work undertaken by the college would fall almost entirely within Categories Four and Five (non-advanced Categories).. (Borough Report, 1982).

Equal Opportunities

In September, 1983, Spencer College opened in an adapted comprehensive school premises, under less than ideal conditions. Builders were still working on ramping the site, had yet to build the external lift, and had begun work on the large multi-skills workshop adjacent to the school premises, which was to be a special feature of the college. Spencer College was committed to a policy of Equality of Opportunity, reflected in their Prospectus:

> ..We aim in particular to provide courses and programmes for groups in the community who are, for a variety of reasons, disadvantaged and who need new opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills. The college programmes are particularly concerned to cater for the specialist needs of ethnic groups, the disabled, the unemployed, unwaged, women and girls.. (Spencer College Prospectus. 1985-6. Appendix C).

The institution was in an unusually favourable position to initiate change and implement policy as it had a clearly defined role to which senior management were committed. The principal and senior staff were appointed before its opening and were

placed in a position to select a team of lecturers in tune with their ideals. As it was new and had a clear concept of its target group, staff were conscious of being pioneers and shared a common camaraderie, coupled with enthusiasm and energy. The college could select courses designed to suit student needs rather than have to assimilate students into existing courses. For all these reasons, staff at Spencer College were able to offer preferential treatment for students with special needs to that which was available in Fraser College.

Special Needs Policy

While the 1981 pilot scheme at Fraser College had begun with no Policy established (it was not to be produced until February 1984) Spencer College was able to produce its Special Needs Policy Statement in May 1984, well within its first year. It is interesting to examine the difference in emphasis within the Policy statements of each college. In Spencer College:

> ..Special Needs provision is available in all academic departments, the Library and Learning Resources Centre, administrative and other appropiate services of Spencer College as well as support and training to all staff.. (Special Needs Policy Statement. May 1984. p.2 Appendix B).

The status of special needs in Spencer College implied a whole-college approach. Rather than appoint a liason lecturer, a post I found to be lonely and powerless, a senior lecturer for Special Needs was appointed, as a member of the senior management team of the college. In this way, Special Needs became a whole-college reponsibility, and the senior lecturer had the authority to initiate change. All staff in the college - lecturers, canteen staff, caretakers and cleaners - were given training in understanding Students with Special Needs. The college received funding to allow training to take place every Wednesday afternoon when full-time staff were released. Therefore, no staff could

say they were unable to attend but the commitment was such that staff were eager to receive training. Cohesion among staff in a new institution, committed to a central ideology, is far easier to obtain than in a long-established, segmented institution like Fraser College. The Policy adopted by Fraser College followed an Assimilation Model:

> ..handicapped students will be integrated into full-time/part-time courses in accordance with their educational qualifications.. (Fraser College Policy: The Integration of Handicapped Students. February 1984, Appendix A).

The benefits for students with special needs which Spencer College had to offer were: access to a wide range of integrated courses and positive attitudes from staff and students, both fostered by the college Policy. This facility was appreciated by staff at Hillcroft who were looking for appropiate further education links for their class of school leavers.

Open Access

Although it was not ready until January 1984, the Multi-Skills Workshop in Spencer College offered a wide range of opportunities to students of varying abilities. It was a large open-plan area, with sections for woodwork, electronics, jewellery-making and painting. An open-access policy operated, which even included students being able to join courses mid-term and wandering in informally, to observe what went on inside. This ease of access was ideally suited to students with special educational needs, and they made up a significant proportion of the clientele from the outset.

I had offered Hillcroft the opportunity to form a Link Course with Fraser College in which the school-leavers class could come in one day a week to participate in various activities. This was discussed in the summer term of the 1982-3 academic year, but no response came during the Autumn term of

1983, apart from the request for part-time attendance in Computer Skills classes for two school-leavers. Yet, in the Spring term of 1984, all the school-leavers class from Hillcroft started attending Spencer College for a one day a week Link Course. Whilst this was obviously disappointing to me at the time, as it implied a loss of confidence in Fraser College, on reflection, I was able to understand the rationale behind it. Spencer College was able to offer integration into mainstream classes. When school-leavers came on their one-day Link Course, they could join other classes in Office Skills, Computing, or Science. These were in classes where access, in terms of pre-course qualification requirements, was open, and where they were learning at their own level. The Multi-Skills Workshop, in which all the school-leavers spent a period of time, was able to offer experiences which the school could not possibly replicate. It had the space, equipment and expertise to enable young people with physical disabilities to make three-dimensional objects, to build furniture, and experiment with large and often dangerous pieces of equipment. There was no doubting the educational value of such practical experiences, within a workshop, rather than classroom environment.

Serving the Community

Spencer College did not only profess to operate an Equal Opportunity Policy: it was seen to practice such a Policy, by serving the needs of ALL students and involving the commitment of ALL staff within its response to students with special needs. When two welfare assistants were appointed in 1984, it was understood that their reponsibility was to the whole community - students with cut fingers, caretakers with headaches, lecturers with flu - as well as having particular responsibility for students with special needs. This is not to imply that they were

not selected as people who offered expertise in the area of special educational support (one coming from nursing in a psychiatric hospital, and the other from long experience both at Hillcroft Special School and the mainstream junior school it liaised with), but that they were to be an INTEGRAL part of the college community. In contrast, the two welfare assistants appointed to Fraser College, with the inception of the pilot scheme in 1981, were assigned specifically for students with disabilities. This isolated them from the rest of the college community and created a bureaucratic division between the two student support staff, both with responsibility for nursing and welfare care within the college community, and the two welfare assistants for students with disablities. In inferring that students with disabilities required a different level of care from that offered to all students, Fraser College served to segregate its special needs students, whilst, by sharing the welfare resources within Spencer College, these students could be incorporated.

Spencer College was not able to begin with every resource already in operation and the first year was one of collective chaos as staff and students had to work together to develop facilities and design methods of working to suit those who had to work within it. This pioneering phase served to unite staff and students, who shared canteen facilities and worked co-operatively in developing the college which they all felt belonged to them. There was a feeling that the college was designed for the students and they were responsible for it. If the early days were difficult for staff, they were difficult for students also. This included students with disabilities who were expected to cope, as they were treated as typical students, rather than SPECIAL CASES. Despite the fact that some students were in

wheelchairs and some needed special toileting facilities there was no special needs suite so

> ..the students simply have to integrate. there's no alternative for them. There isn't a Base Room, nothing for them to withdraw to that might isolate them.. (Senior Lecturer for Special Needs, May 1985).

Just as students with disabilities were included in the general pattern of college life, so lecturers of all subject areas, and at all levels of seniority, were included in college commitment to Equal Opportunities.

Staff Training

This was most clearly demonstrated in the staff training procedure where all staff attended classes on Special Needs, Racial Awareness, and Gender every week until they had completed the course. This was obviously an effective method of extending awareness, such that

> ..at the end of our second year, apart from staff who have joined recently, most of the staff who started in 1983 have attended Special Needs staff development and, as a result of that and teaching on courses, have opted to do special needs work next year.. (Senior Lecturer for Special Needs, Spencer College, May 1985)

Staff training went across the institution, and was not confined to one department. Special needs work was not designated as low status, but as a commitment of the college. Not only were all staff - teaching, ancillary, and administrative - receiving training but all students were included in the policy of Equal Opportunities:

> ..if any student is seen whose behaviour is deemed as either racist, sexist, or demeaning to students with special needs, then s/he can be excluded from the college...(College Policy, read out to all students at the beginning of an academic year by the Principal.)

Such a whole-hearted commitment to positive discrimination within the framework of the institution meant that the policy towards students with special needs was just part of an overall impetus. In Fraser College students with special needs were a

group apart unless they could easily assimilate into the curriculum framework. At Spencer College I felt conscious of their power to participate on equal standing with their peers and their lecturers. This made a significant difference to the role of the senior lecturer for Special Needs. Apart from the advantage of enjoying senior management status within the institution, she was in a position where the right of people with disablities to participate fully in the community of Spencer College was not disputed. Staff and students were expected to be aware of the needs of their fellow members with disabilities and to be both responsive and receptive to changes in teaching method and curriculum, as the need arose. Her role did not have to focus upon Public Relations as the college had done this for her. She was able to concentrate upon developing provision and was relieved of the stress of coping with a tentative pilot scheme, as had been the case at Fraser College.

> ...This made my job much easier and saved me coming up against a barrage of negative attitudes...
> (Senior Lecturer for Special Needs, May 1985)

Commitment to Special Needs

At Fraser College, when I was interviewed for my job as liasion lecturer, I asked the principal if the College was going to offer provision for people with moderate and severe learning difficulties, as this was the current trend. He was emphatic in his answer that the response of Fraser College to the Warnock Report was to offer access for students with disabilities but not to provide special courses for students with learning difficulties. In a meeting of the National Bureau for Handicapped Students, held at Spencer College on 11th November 1985, the principal recorded that, of the 1,300 students at the college (81% part-time) 270 had special educational needs. Of these, 30 in-filled into mainstream course provision, 105 came

from the nearby adult training centre and the remainder came onto the Link Course or the Special Needs Catering Course. She offered the Multi-Skills Workshop as an example of truly comprehensive teaching, where there might be local polytechnic students doing an Engineering project alongside recent school-leavers and students with special needs. After all,

> ..it was designed for the consumer, not for the tutor or external examiner. (Principal, Spencer College, NBHS Meeting, 11th Nov.1985)

This illustrates the level of community participation which further education is supposed to offer yet rarely achieves. The principal was evidently delighted that Spencer College had been able to provide for so many students with special needs. This included adults in Social Service provision who had never had the opportunity to attend a college before. No stigma was attached to displaying a clear commitment to these students within a college of further education.

This undoubtedly reflected the contrasting level of work which prevailed in each college. It also indicated why Spencer College could provide for the student whose physical disability was coupled with learning difficulties as well as the student who could integrate into mainstream O and A level courses. It is not surprising, therefore, that Spencer College was able to provide for students with special needs in a more comprehensive and co-operative manner than Fraser College could ever offer.

Chapter 17

A TRANSITION TO A DISABLED STATUS.

In this chapter I examine Harefield's Equal Opportunities Policy (Appendix D) as it relates to a lecturer who became disabled as a result of an accident, while being employed by the borough as a member of the teaching staff at Fraser College. I discuss her experience of equal opportunities, her treatment by other members of the college community and the contrast between a policy of offering equality of opportunity and the harsh reality of practice. Her story reflects Harefield's response to people with disabilities and to the practice of a policy for equal opportunities, which the artifice of the integration scheme to incorporate specific students with disabilities fails to reveal. It indicates the under-lying hypocrisy in this form of token integration.

Whilst examples of innovative practice might imply that Harefield was an enlightened borough, the LEA's treatment of an employee indicates that narrow stereotyping persisted. Molly Francis had worked as a part-time lecturer at Fraser College for short periods during the 1982-83 academic year, teaching in the Department of Business Studies. She was exceptionally well qualified, with a doctorate in Sociology, and applied for a full-time post for which she was interviewed on 6th June 1983. On the 22nd June she received a letter from the borough confirming her appointment as full-time lecturer from September 1983 at Fraser College. Just one week later, on June 29th, Dr. Francis went to the rescue of a young child, trapped on a ledge bordering her local railway line. In the event, the child scrambled to safety but Molly fell twenty feet onto the line and broke her back. From that day onwards she would be permanently paralysed below the waist.

Fraser College was informed of her accident on June 30th. 1983, and as soon as she was well enough Molly wrote from her bed at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, sending a medical certificate for the beginning of the Autumn term and explaining that she planned to return to work in September 1984 at the latest. She was then to experience her change of status as,

> ..the initial reaction was to me as a disabled person and my status as such was made very clear when Harefield Council's first response to my disability was to declare my newly acquired contract of employment void, as I had not turned up for work on the first day of term. I was, at that point, just learning to use a wheelchair, having spent 9 weeks flat on my back in bed..
> (Molly Francis, interviewed 1987).

In experiencing a traumatic change from able-bodied citizen to wheelchair-bound dependent, Molly learnt to see society from a different perspective:

> ..And this was the first lesson that I learnt from my new status. The negative assumptions and views held about disabled people are of such strength that there is many, many a slip between intention and implementation. It's like racism and sexism. The discrimination is deep within people's subconscious and permeates our social institutions..
> (Molly Francis, interviewed 1987).

Dr. Francis found herself in an ambivalent position in Fraser College, as her professional standing was at odds with her evident disability. She was confronted with the straitjacket of rigid stereotyping, albeit within a blanket of compassion and caring.

Dispelling Stereotype

Dr. Francis found herself accorded the status of honorary able-bodied person as her disability was ignored:

> ..Being a disabled college lecturer is a paradoxical situation.. It is assumed that such a severely disabled person is unemployed and is dependent on others. Other assumptions are also part of this general image of a disabled person - poverty, lack of ability, lack of mobility, lack of control over one's life. To be a college lecturer, on the other hand, is to be defined as

> a professional, someone with above average educational qualifications and above average earnings, someone in control, articulate and autonomous..
> (Molly Francis, interviewed 1987).

On finding that alterations to Fraser College were required in order to adequately accommodate her basic needs, Molly was able to articulate these requirements and enter into a regular debate with management in the college and LEA as to the progress of structural alterations. This was a natural development of her role as an autonomous professional, yet her newly acquired disabled status made her feel guilty for adopting anything other than the conventional dependent, passive role:

> ..Every time I asked about progress I was made to feel as if I was asking for something which was a great deal of trouble, and indeed my first reaction on learning that the alterations had finally been done was to be incredibly grateful and to think of writing a thank you letter. However I didn't, as I felt that this would be falling into the trap that had been set to make me feel as if I really had no right to ask for such alterations to be done and that if they were done it was as a very big favour..(Molly Francis, interviewed 1987).

Her experiences accord with the concept of personal tragedy theory (Oliver, 1983), where a form of social oppression presents disability as a problem, in which the individuals assume a dependent role, their needs regarded as part of a private inadequacy rather than a public responsibility. Thus, Dr. Francis was made to feel that she should be grateful, when all she was requesting was a degree of equality of opportunity.

Molly found her position particularly difficult in relation to the image of disability which members of the college community had formed from their experience of the students with disabilities. Most of the students had experienced congenital, as opposed to traumatic, disability. Many had come directly from the special school environment where they had become accustomed to passive acceptance in relation to caring professionals. Some people at Fraser College - looking at her wheelchair - simply

assumed that she was a student:

> ..Thus I get patronising remarks in the lift, or someone points out that I shouldn't be using the staff toilet..People offer help when I am doing things which don't require help..(ibid).

and not all colleagues appreciate her need for an autonomous role commensurate with their own:

> ..This attitude has come out recently over my having to park my car in a way which blocks other cars because someone else has parked in the disabled driver's space in the college car park. One member of staff threatened to cut my car brakes at the same time as saying to other members of staff how sorry he feels for me. This particular incident has confirmed my view that the patronising pity expressed for disabled people is conditional on our fulfilling the role expected of us - that of passive dependence..(ibid).

Whilst I am recording the way in which students with disabilities were integrated into the community of Fraser College, I cannot ignore the way in which a lecturer at the college was perceived. The political and window dressing aspects of token developments can mask underlying inequalities as the educational provision in Harefield demonstrates. The scheme to integrate students with physical handicaps was a public response to Warnock - a parade of borough and college commitment. The treatment of a lecturer with disabilities was a covert display of management hypocrisy.

Policy and Practice

Two examples of management attitudes illustrate this. The first was management's use of me, in my capacity as liaison lecturer for disabled students, as a spokesperson for Molly Francis. Whenever Molly requested a meeting with management in the college or with senior officials from the borough, I was asked by management to accompany her, and expected to speak for the disabled. I always felt uncomfortable in this buffer role, being fully aware that Molly could articulate her wishes with greater clarity than I could, and that no other member of

the teaching staff would expect this almost custodial approach. However, I also became aware of the tension which often accompanied such meetings, as management came to regard this autonomous professional who had not adapted to her passive disabled status as a threat and agitator. Molly was also conscious of the animosity she often provoked through her perfectly reasonable, yet too positive to be acceptable, requests, and I think she appreciated my being there as an ally. Whilst Molly requested my presence, as well as management expecting this to be part of my role, I complied, but I always felt it denied Molly the level of independence which most lecturers took for granted. A patronising attitude from LEAs and management and low expectations of progression were common experiences of teachers with disabilities (Kettle, 1986). It appeared that Molly's experience was typical of people who found themselves in her position, LEA ideology failing to lead to genuine equality of opportunity.

The second example of management attitudes was particularly disturbing in that it reflected an acceptance of restricted promotion prospects just because a lecturer was in a wheelchair. Molly was given the job as course tutor to a class whose tutorial room was on the eighth floor of the tower block, although the lift only reached the seventh floor. Whilst she could teach the group in their classroom on the seventh floor, she was unable to come for informal sessions and tutorials to the eighth. Classrooms were so heavily booked that there was no opportunity to change rooms mid-term. Yet, surely the head of department must have been aware of this practical problem when allocating rooms initially? Molly, being a conscientious teacher, decided that she would have to give up her role as course tutor in 1986-7, as she felt that she was unable to fulfil it adequately within these

conditions. However, she realised that this would probably be jeopardizing her future promotion prospects. She called in Senior Education Officers from the Borough of Harefield to discuss the issue of access in relation to their policy of Equal Opportunities. Once more, the onus had been upon her, as the oppressed individual, to articulate her disadvantaged situation.

If Harefield wanted to offer true equality of opportunity for lecturers with disabilities they needed to ensure a level of participation which enabled them to have an appropriate forum for debate with management, built into the system, and offer opportunities for progression and promotion in which being confined to a wheelchair presents no obstruction. Without such basic rights, an Equal Opportunities Policy was nothing but empty rhetoric.

Chapter 18

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TRAINING WORKSHOP & YTS SCHEMES IN HAREFIELD

Chapter 18 examines developments in the Training Workshop attached to the Community Unit and in the Youth Training Scheme in Harefield. In it, I trace the situation which ultimately led to the demise of the Training Workshop; I describe the Mode B Workshops in Harefield's Youth Training Scheme; I examine the level of support they received from the borough's education service and the staff dissatisfaction which resulted from inadequate borough provision for young people with special educational needs in Harefield's Youth Training Scheme. Whilst developments in this area of the borough's provision may not appear to be directly relevant to developments within Fraser College, they serve as a valuable reflection upon the general lack of coherent policy and planning for post-16 provision which marred progression in the college integration scheme.

Training Workshop Provision

The Training Workshop, attached to the Community Unit at Fraser College, had been offering pre-vocational training for young people, including those with special educational needs, since 1976. This marked Harefield as an innovative LEA as such workshop based resources were few. The workshop offered training in woodwork, craft and photography and electrical maintenance. It provided a sheltered environment whilst forging links with local firms for work placement. In form and content it was not dissimilar from the YOP initiatives and YTS which followed it. However, despite the high regard in which it was held by local specialist careers officers who found it an ideal placement for many school leavers with special needs, staff became unhappy with the imbalance of trainees with special needs in the group, and began to create a more selected target group. At its peak the

training workshop had catered for 16 trainees, half of whom had special needs. Yet when Sue James started as workshop manager in January 1983 there were only six trainees with four staff as a result of the policy of selected intake over the preceeding months. As she found herself directed by Maggie Major, the intensely political head of the Unit, she was caught up in complex union disputes from the early stages of her short stay at Fraser College.

In September, 1983, representatives of the Manpower Services Commission met with members of Fraser College management and NATFHE representatives to discuss the potential target group for the Youth Training Scheme in Harefield, and to introduce the inclusion of trainees with special educational needs. A policy of integration throughout YTS was generally agreed by this Committee, but became a source of dispute within some Mode B workshops, where staff felt they were taking on enough problems already without integrating trainees with special needs. At this stage, the training workshop in the Unit was included among potential YTS provision but Maggie Major rejected the idea of including trainees with physical disabilities in the workshop. Whilst NATFHE were defending the views of Mode B workshop staff to college management, Sue James was not allowed to implement the YTS Course which she had prepared for the workshop.

Power Games

Sue's position became increasingly intolerable. She was unable to rely on the loyalty of staff who taught her trainees, as one lecturer who wrote fifteen pages of her ninety page Report, The Aims and Objectives of the Training workshop, then spoke in Committee against the continued existence of what he considered a segregated provision. Her Report suggested that the workshop should become an independent Mode B YTS provision,

rather than remain an integral part of the Unit. Maggie and her loyal team in the Unit rejected the idea of the workshop becoming independent, and suggested to Sue that a curriculum which concentrated upon art and craft activities was preferable to the broad-based curriculum favoured by the MSC. The situation was still unresolved in December, so the principal issued an ultimatum that unless the report was accepted by NATFHE before the end of the last day of the Autumn term, the workshop would have to be closed. NATFHE representatives signed an acceptance at 2pm on the last day of term, having ensured the maximum stress for both Sue and the management.

After a barren Autumn term, during which staff and trainees were uncertain of the workshop's future, only three trainees remained with four staff. It was impossible for Sue to recruit more trainees with the three new YTS courses competing for student numbers. In March the workshop had to be closed, as student numbers made it no longer viable. The four staff were offered teaching posts in Harefield's new Mode B workshops, and two accepted this offer. Sue James left Fraser College, and the Borough of Harefield at the end of the Easter term to take up a post in a rural community. Despite her considerable experience in managing workshop provision, she had been unable to make any impact within the impregnable situation which she had unwittingly entered. Her case demonstrates the vulnerability of individuals within a borough and institutional framework which lacks policy and in which political power predominates.

Y.T.S. Workshops

The YTS Mode B workshops were started in Harefield with the customary lack of planning. Many workshop staff had no relevant teaching experience:

..with the exception of the Manager, the Training

> Officer and the Catering Instructor, the staff all came from industry, with no teaching experience.. (Workshop Report, 1984).

Yet, as the example of Jim Shaw illustrated, an industrial background does not preclude exceptional teaching ability, and Mode B staff were deemed to have gained this through practical experience, such that

> ..this skill has now been highly developed, and staff are committed to meeting the needs of the trainees. The latter, as usual with Mode B Schemes, have a great deal of obvious needs, not only in academic terms but in personal terms..(Workshop Report, 1984).

Staff in the workshops were finding that many non-statemented trainees were presenting special educational needs which they had failed to anticipate:

> ..Lots of kids in the YTS are from Tutor Groups. They've not been into school for years. Some are not able to read or write. (Workshop Instructor, 1984).

Some trainees were displaying violent or neurotic behaviour which staff were completely unprepared for:

> ..One girl got into a paddy in the afternoon and locked herself in the toilet. By the time we were told about it, and got her out, she had slashed her arms with a razor. We only found out later that she had a record of psychiatric illness.. (Instructor, 1984).

The mainstream student in the Mode B YTS in Harefield was often a young person who had failed at secondary school, and who was ill-motivated to learn. Almost three-quarters of the students in Mode B YTS were from ethnic minorities, generally being West Indians (Table 14). Table 14 implies that there were almost 50% of trainees with special needs in one Mode B YTS in Harefield. The association of special educational need with ethnic minority was disputed when an instructor from a Mode B YTS produced her Table during a seminar discussion at Spencer College in 1984. However, there is substantial recent research evidence to corroborate he findings, in as much as they relate to a high level of educational disadvantage among West Indians in poor

Table 14

Percentage of ethnic minorities and special needs trainees in the Harefield Youth Training Scheme 1984.

In one Mode B scheme	
ethnic minorities	72%
special needs	
emotional and psychological problems and slow-learners	21%
literacy problems	27%
behavioural problems	32%
Total of special needs trainees	48%
On Mode A schemes in Harefield (rough estimate)	
Borough Scheme	
ethnic minorities	70%
special needs	25%
private sector	
ethnic minorities	40%
special needs	10%

(produced by a Mode B YTS Instructor, 1984).

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districts, and a high proportion of West Indians finding themselves in Mode B YTS (DES 1972; Herbert & Smith, 1985; Mackney, 1985). The division between statemented and non-statemented categories of special need are irrelevant in the context of Mode B YTS. Recent figures from a Harefield Employment Officer, who cannot be suspected of the bias which the YTS instructor might have had, suggest that all Mode B YTS in Harefield had substantial combinations of both types of special need (Table 15).

Table 15

TRAINEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN YTS IN HAREFIELD: MARCH 1985.

	Statemented Disabled	Special Needs (Others)
Mode A	In House 17.05%	-
	Private/Voluntary 14.15%	-
Mode B	Scheme A 2.7%	5.41%
	Scheme B 12.5%	9.62%
	Scheme C 5.0%	10.0%

Yet this is not the case in Mode A YTS in the borough, where selectivity clearly operates. Comments on Mode A YTS selection in Harefield corroborate the 1986 ICO/RADAR survey:

> ..all young people on the council's in house clerical scheme take the RSA Voc. Prep., B.Tec. General or National. Entry on these schemes is therefore, selective and although 25% of the places are reserved for disabled young people.
> ..these have not, to date, included even some trainees with learning difficulties.. (Harefield Employment Officer, February 1986).

Whilst, in theory, a wide range of options were available to special school leavers in YTS, in practice, they were restricted in their choice, for although,

> ..all the special needs trainees are integrated into the scheme, many of the slow-learners end up in the workshop for Carpentry, because this seems their best option. They are unsure of Electronics, Typing, Computers, Graphics and Design. This tends to give a label to carpentry.. (Instructor, 1984).

Several options, like computer literacy, required a level of competence in numeracy and literacy which effectively barred many special school leavers. Restricted choice, through intellectual limitations, became even more restricted when applied to those in wheelchairs, as

> ..the present problems to fully integrating the disabled are access, resources and staff training. This centre (for computer literacy) is located on the top of a three-storey building, with no lift, and door widths and toilet locations which preclude those in wheelchairs. (Workshop Manager, 1984).

Table 16

From: Specialist Careers Adviser, Special Needs. February 1984.
Summary: 1983 Special School Leavers and Destinations (as far as is known).

Type of young person	Total No.	L/R	N/K	RAS	Placed	Placed into work	Found work	F.E. College	Other e.g. C.P. scheme or Day Centre
Moderate Learning Difficulties E.S.N. (M)	41	4	3	9	Mode A = 7 (3) * Mode B = 12 (5) Mode B2 = 2	1	0	3	0
Physically Handicapped (P.H.)	18	0	0	6	Mode A = 1 Mode B = 4 (2)	0	0	4	3
Sensory Handicap									
a) Hearing	10	1	1	0	Mode A = 1 Mode B = 3 (1)	0	1	3	0
b) Vision	5	0	0	1	Mode A = 1 Mode B = 1 (1)	0	0	2	0
Emotional & Behavioural Problems (Maladjusted)	37	9	5	0	Mode A = 5 (2) Mode B = 8 (3) Mode B2 = 1	1	3	5	0
Severe Learning Difficulties E.S.N. (S)	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

In brackets are the numbers of those who have dropped out of the YTS.

KEY:

(P) = Placed onto scheme or into work or college by C.A. (Careers Adviser, Cheryl Jones), or school (teacher at Moselle, John Priest).
R.A.S. = Remaining at school.
Y.T.S. = Youth Training Scheme Mode B = Workshop-based
Mode A = Employer-based Mode B2= College-based
F.E. = Further Education College, for General Education Course, Work Preparation or Vocational training.
F.W. = Found work through their own efforts.
N/K or ? = Not known
L/R = On the Careers Office's Live Register, unemployed, and usually claiming benefit.

To teachers in a school like Hillcroft, where Computer Technology for children with physical disabilities had reached an advanced stage of development, such an anomaly seemed absurd and typified Harefield's lack of policy and planning. Placing expensive new equipment and providing valuable training in a location which denied entry to those very students who were to select this option reflected a total lack of consultation and LEA policy.

Level of Support

Even for a student with relatively minor mobility problems, the scheme was unrealistic:

> ..I couldn't cope with it all. For a start, the stairs were so steep and narrow I would be scared of falling down, and I certainly would be in danger in a fire. I could never manage the stairs when others were using them..(potential trainee, 1984).

This boy went on to express his doubt about the level of support he might receive:

> ..they didn't seem to offer the sort of help with computer work that I need and I would be scared of falling behind the others..I found that there wasn't much structure there. I wouldn't be able to concentrate like that..(ibid).

This was Mark, a sixteen year old who was leaving Hillcroft, and had an interest in computers. He had athetoid cerebral palsy, which affected his gait, speech and written work. He had unusual perception and maturity for his age, and was aware of his own special needs, both physical and academic.As Mark observed, he needed more help than staff appeared able to offer. The ratio of staff to trainees was inadequate for the combined special needs in the Mode B YTS. Throwing special school leavers, who had been receiving an intensive level of support, into an unsupported situation and then calling this integration is surely a travesty of the term. The combination, within the Mode B YTS, of complex special educational needs and inadequate staffing led to a high rate of failure, especially among those with statemented special

needs.

The Table produced by Harefield's Specialist Careers Officer in February, 1984, reveals a depressingly high drop-out rate, among special school leavers in YTS (Table 16). Reasons given for dropping out reflect the problems already examined within the Scheme:

> ..they didn't like it; couldn't keep up; didn't have the necessary monitoring or support; course content was not suited to their needs; YTS instructors felt they were too time-consuming; wanted more staff if they were to cater for slower trainees..(Special Career Officer, Feb. 1984).

Dropping out simply because a course was not instantly appealing reflected lack of motivation, which is often found in young people for whom learning has been an experience of repeated failure. Not being able to keep up was a reflection of the inadequate staff-trainee ratio which led staff to complain that slower trainees were time-consuming and they needed more staff to cope with them. The necessary monitoring, support and suitable course content all suggest the need for an increased level of staffing, including specialist staff. Without specialist support, it seemed that potential trainees were being rejected purely on the grounds of their special educational needs:

> ..I'm having trainees with special needs rejected before going on to schemes - not coming off soon after starting. For example a withdrawn slow-learner wants to do painting and decorating but they've rejected him because they say he's too slow..(Specialist Careers Officer, 1984).

Integrated provision, when it is as unsupported as Mode B YTS in Harefield, highlights problems rather that alleviates them.

Staff Dissatisfaction

Inadequate planning and lack of policy works as a destructive force within education initiatives. Just as the fiasco at Fraser College drew critical response from NATFHE so the inadequate preparation for integration in YTS created angry

staff reaction:

> ..a policy decision should be made concerning the proportion of special needs trainees it is possible to cope with effectively..in-service training should be available for all staff..the LEA should adopt a consistent approach to YTS likely to recruit special needs trainees..a special needs support unit could be established..a peripatetic special needs tutor could spend allocated time with each mode B scheme..staff/ trainee ratios should be adjusted in relation to needs..(report of Working Party of YTS Tutors and LEA Officers, 1984).

None of these recommendations are unreasonable, but reflect genuine concern for those trainees with special educational needs who were unable to sustain the course. However, they were to receive an unsympathetic response from Harefield's Education Officers, who appeared to regard these tutors as political agitators, much as management had regarded Union activists at Fraser College. This was again fostering conflict and the us and them attitude of minority groups. Mode B YTS was a locational integration, being sited at least a mile from either Spencer or Fraser College, and was to gain the unit stigma with associated unit resistance. These YTS Schemes appeared to be gaining the worst of all possible deals: a locational integration, and a lack of specialist support through links with Special Schools or a peripatetic network.

Withdrawal of Expertise

Another remarkable anomaly in Harefield's educational provision was the lack of correlation between the high degree of specialist support offered at school level and the paucity at post-school level. The specialist support provided within the Harefield school-based integration schemes for children with hearing impairment and physical disabilities was exceptionally generous. There were four specialist teachers to eight hearing impaired children in functional integration and twenty specialist teachers to fifty three hearing impaired pupils in locational

integration. In Newcross, where fifteen children with physical disabilities are functionally integrated, there is a full-time support teacher, from Hillcroft, responsible for the needs of these pupils, as well as a full-time welfare assistant. Whilst I am not denying the need for this level of support, I am questioning the dramatic drop in support at post-16 level. Pupils with physical disabilities or hearing impairment, who were receiving intensive support at school, are taken into YTS in Harefield, with minimal support available. Under the guise of integration, they are left to sink or swim. The high drop-out rate of all special school leavers from Mode B YTS testifies to the need for continued specialist support. Special educational needs are unlikely to disappear at the age of sixteen, although the approach in Harefield might imply that they should.

While Mode B YTS was heralded as an opportunity for young people with the labels moderate learning difficulties and behaviour problems to obtain the integrated provision denied them at school-level, it became for many yet another chance to fail. A policy which planned for long term provision would have ensured the continuum of support required to sustain the difficult transition from school to post-16 provision. Yet again, the notion of integration has been used as an excuse to ignore responsibilities and, in so doing, perpetuate an inequitable hierarchy.

Table 17

FULL TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1984-1985

student	disability	qualifications	background	progress
Susan	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	none	residential special school	disappointing
Kay	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	2 CSEs English 3 Biology 4	Hillcroft School	long absences
Pat	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	2 CSEs Typing 4 Art 3	Hillcroft School	steady & reliable
Jane	spina bifida	3 CSEs English 2 Biology 2 History 3 GCE O level Art C	Hillcroft School	very good
Mark	athetoid cerebral palsy	2 CSEs History 3 Biology 3	Hillcroft School	good

N.B. All full time students in 1984-1985, including the 4 out of 6 Hillcroft school leavers, have complex handicaps. There are none, like Michael with primarily physical disorders.

Chapter 19

EXPANDING PROVISION : 1983-1985

Chapter 19 describes the expansion of student numbers and extension of curriculum provision between 1983 and 1985. I discuss the inclusion of a substantial proportion of mature students within the Bridging Course, the restrictions imposed by the limited definition of integration under which we were placed and the effect of a visit by a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Criticisms were levelled at lack of coherent borough and institutional policy, inappropriate curriculum emphasis and inadequate staff training. The result of this visit was that I made efforts to extend liaison in the community from which our students came, creating an interchange between staff in Fraser College and staff in feeder institutions and developing curriculum innovations from a sharing of expertise. I illustrate the complexity of student needs by describing one specific student whose problems reflect those of a notable proportion on the Bridging Course. The external appraisal of May, 1985, highlighted the fact that Fraser College had sought to incorporate one narrowly-conceived type of disability whereas the need within the local community was for a breadth of curriculum provision to suit a wide range of interests and abilities.

The number of students with disabilities attending Fraser College expanded from 16 in 1983-4 to 36 in 1984-5, in a period which saw the impact of initiatives for adults with disabilities in Harefield and the increased interest in developing links with further education. The narrow Bridging Course framework was to gradually change as external initiatives influenced curriculum development. 1984-5 saw the largest group of students coming from Hillcroft School since the 1981-2 pilot year (Table 17).

Only one girl, Kay, selected Fraser College as her first choice. Two other students, Mark and Pat, had decided upon Spencer College, but were unable to go there because no welfare assistants were in post at that stage, and the principal would not take any students with physical disabilities without them. Jane had been undecided up until the last moment, and had seen various YTS options before she selected Fraser College. I was all too aware of the fortuitous reasons for our expansion in student numbers. Choice was limited as Spencer College was not yet ready to receive students with physical disabilities and I had abandoned the O level content in the Bridging Course and was therefore, in a position to offer open access into a modified curriculum.

Mature Students

I was contacted, in July, 1984, by the officer-in-charge of Highfield Hall to ask if several members of that day centre could attend Fraser College. Word of the link with Milton Road Centre had spread to the traditional day centre in Harefield, and the new officer-in-charge there was eager to turn to the local educational services rather than to teach only on site. This link proved to be very fruitful, just as Milton Road before it. I learnt that mature students, some of whom had become disabled later in life, had different objectives in further education to those of most school-leavers. The members of the two day centres who opted for part-time classes at college had selected the subject areas themselves. The full-time school-leavers chose the Course but may have had little interest in some of the components. Motivation among part-time mature students was correspondingly higher than among most full-time students on the course. Whilst part-time students from Grasswick College and Waterloo House generally had complex handicaps, which included

learning difficulties, this was not the case with students from the day centres. In the 1984-1985 year, their physical disabilities ranged from hemiplegia as a result of a stroke, to blindness, to multiple sclerosis, to paralysis after a road accident, to polio and epilepsy, as well as spina bifida and hydrocephalus, and cerebral palsy (Table 18). Some had a degree of intellectual impairment, while others had purely physical handicaps. This heterogeneity was stimulating and called for the flexibility of adult education provision to maximise the rich life experiences of an adult group.

Table 18

PART TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1984-1985

student	disability	background	progress
Ben	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	moving to YTS (dropped out after one term
Sharon	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	continued to '85-'86 course
Leon	cerebral course	Grasswick College	went to live at home
Ruth	hydrocephalus	Grasswick College	continued to '85-'86 course
May	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	dropped-out of computer studies
June	cerebral palsy	Grasswick College	dropped out: unable to cope emotionally
student	disability	background	progress
Mary	cerebral palsy	Milton Rd Centre	dropped out: felt confident to cope after 18 months attendance
Dennis	hemiplegia after a stroke	Milton Rd Centre	continued to '85-'86 course
Margaret	cerebral palsy	Milton Rd Centre	good attendance through '84-'85 course
Rachel	blind	Milton Rd Centre	continued to '85-'86 course
Jillian	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Milton Rd Centre	continued to '85-'86 course
Linda	cerebral palsy & epilepsy	Milton Rd Centre	dropped out to join YTS in first term. (dropped-out of YTS)

Table 18 Contd.

PART TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1984-1985

student	disability	background	progress
Robert	multiple sclerosis	Milton Rd Centre	dropped-out of computer studies
Kate	athetoid cerebral palsy	Milton Rd Centre	continued into 3rd year in '85-'86
Carl	paralysis after road accident	Milton Rd Centre	dropped-out of computer studies
Hassan	paralysis after road accident	independent	dropped-out no suitable course
Josephine	epilepsy	Highfield Hall	dropped-out: dislike disabled identity
Leslie	hemiplegia from a stroke	Highfield Hall	continued to '85-'86 course
Cheryl	polio	Highfield Hall	dropped-out: found attendance too tiring
Sally	cerebral palsy	Highfield Hall	continued to 1985-1986
Arnold	cerebral palsy	Highfield Hall	continued to 1985-1986
Marion	hemiplegia	Highfield Hall	continued to 1985-1986
Tracey	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Waterloo House	completed course in June 1985
Jenny	cerebral palsy	Waterloo House	moved to YTS in Sept. 1985. (a Special Needs scheme)
Pauline	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Waterloo House	completed course in June 1985. Went to Spencer College part-time

DROP-OUT RATE: 9 out of 26 students. c.34%

A Qualified Success

Whilst the numbers of students with disabilities had sc dramatically increased, resources were not provided to cater for the wide range of need. Few of the students coming from the day centres or special school had academic qualifications or practical skills to qualify them for inclusion on the narrow vocational courses offered at the college. They were trapped in

the Bridging Course, simply because there was no alternative, despite their desire for integrated provision. It was extremely frustrating for me to observe mature students who would have benefitted from inclusion in adult education classes being understimulated within the Bridging Course, whilst some students with complex learning difficulties were not receiving the most appropiate programme through lack of staff training, facilities and L.E.A. finance. The trap within which we were caught was one of our role in Harefield. Our role, it appeared to me, was to integrate students with purely physical handicaps into the range of existing classes at Fraser College. No allowance was made for the drastically changed composition of pupil population at Hillcroft School nor the reality of diversity of need among adults with disabilities in the community. We were framed within a stereotype of placement equating integration. Within this narrow definition, I was being praised by both management and NATFHE at Fraser College for the expansion of student numbers being a sure sign of success and assimilation.

The emphasis was upon the quantity of developments and not the quality. I was fully aware that our expansion had not improved our provision significantly, nor could it until the Borough of Harefield made a real commitment to resource this provision and facilitate staff training. One of the crucial political factors which mitigated against this development was the establishment and growth of Spencer College, which Harefield had recognised as being the primary source of pre-vocational further education in the borough. With the usual limitation of finance, it was apparent that Spencer College was receiving the maximum resource input whilst Fraser College was not seen as needing support in the pre-vocational area to anything like the

same degree. Yet, as the Bridging Course had been established with grossly inadequate resources, there was a critical need for replanning of the role of such work at Fraser College.

External Appraisal

It was not until there was an inspection of both colleges of further education in Harefield, by an HMI for Special Education, in May 1985, that this need for replanning was voiced. After spending a day in Fraser College, observing the Bridging Course programme, she assessed that

> ..Fraser College has been like Topsy grown, and not developed from a policy. Harefield needs to look at the work of the two colleges and see what each college should be doing. The work in Fraser College has developed from the concept that there would be able physically handicapped students coming forward, but, in fact, there is a wide diversity here..
> (HMI Report, May 1985)

My reaction was ambivalent, for, on the one hand, I rejoiced in hearing my own frustrations and anxieties so clearly articulated, whilst, on the other, I felt the pain of being in direct line of fire. The HMI was also examining Harefield's further education provision overall, so remarked that

> ..it seems odd that the Link Course for physically handicapped school-leavers is in another college, so that students get to know the routine and the staff over there and then come here for a full-time course. In terms of organisation, the authority needs to have a closer look. They need to assess the work generally. It is very hard to establish this kind of work in a college of traditional work... (HMI Report, May 1985)

In her latter statement, the difficulty of developing this type of provision in so traditional a model is clearly perceived, and is the key to the problems I faced. The outside observations of the HMI revealed the weakness of which most internal participants had been unaware. No LEA policy had initiated the process. Therefore it must remain placement with no room for development. The false premise under which the scheme had been developed had to be reconsidered. There was no logic in establishing a Link

Course without anticipating progression from that course into the Link College. A College of traditional work, like Fraser College, was not receptive to incorporating non-advanced work of this nature into its framework.

The HMI's pertinent remarks were to lead to the demise of the full-time Bridging Course in July 1986 and I reflected that the scheme would not have been initiated at Fraser College in the first place had it been made clear from the outset that those students coming from Hillcroft School were going to need suitable non-advanced course provision, as O and A level work was inappropiate. In 1981 curriculum for pre-vocational training was not an area which the management of Fraser College were the least interested in developing, despite the local need. However, it must be recognised that had Fraser College not been made accessible, those students in wheelchairs who were able to progress within the institution would have been denied the opportunity and this would have given someone like Michael a limited further education choice.

The HMI, having recognised the limitations of the traditional type of college, then assessed the corresponding effect on the process of integration:

> ..at present the institution does not offer progression for physically handicapped less-able students - while the intellectually able can go anywhere, the less able are confined.. (HMI Report, May 1985)

By this criteria, Michael and Peter, who had progressed from the Bridging Course to an Electronics Course in the Engineering Department, were seen as successful within the process of integration, while Susan, Kay and Pat, who were either ill-qualified or unsuited for any courses at Fraser College, had to leave the Bridging Course with no possibility of progression. Her fundamental criticism of the institution was in its treatment

of the whole special needs area in which she saw that

> ..staff are bogged down with PR work. The curriculum has not started with the needs of the students, but with a subject based school timetable. The staff need confidence-building and curriculum development..
> (HMI Report, May 1985)

These informed observations are critically important in both assessing the problems in the placement model generally, and in this scheme in particular.

This model of integration dissipates energy into window-dressing rather than responding to student needs. I was aware that I played a liaison role in which diplomacy and tact were guiding forces but which always relegated me to the periphery and never permitted active participation in institutional policy. Despite my inclusion on many committees in Fraser College, my low status gave me no power and, throughout my period in this post, I had to waste energy on chasing resources and begging favours, rather than developing curriculum and teaching methods. I never felt that we, as a Special Needs Unit, grew out of feeling the uncomfortable, beholden guests within a host institution, and, in such a situation, public relations takes precedence over all else.

Lack of Policy

The HMI accurately assessed that staff needed curriculum development but I was in a difficult position to implement this. Whereas, at Spencer College, a prescribed period had been set aside for this area and special needs commanded high status, at Fraser College I was left to arrange staff development sessions which were generally attended by a few committed lecturers, the majority disregarding this as low status, irrelevant work.

The curriculum of the Bridging Course had progressed through uneasy and disjointed stages to its unsatisfactory state at the time of the HMI visit in May 1985. Its historical development

can be traced from 1982 when a selection of O levels and general education was proposed by a committee, whilst pre-vocational training was regarded as more appropiate by John Cook. This debate was unresolved when in 1983 the Course started with a structure of four O levels and general education. In its second year, 1984-85, O levels were dropped, but the course remained subject-based. In 1985, there were the widest range of student abilities and needs since the course began, but still it was subject-based.

Clearly these erratic stages indicate that, just as provision at Fraser College was unpredictable and not policy-directed, so curriculum in the Bridging Course was unrelated to the changing needs of the student group. In 1985, we were still confined within the subject-based O level model which had operated in 1983-1984. Then it was for some purpose, in that O levels were the objectives of two of the three students. By 1985, it was clearly redundant, as the HMI was quick to perceive:

> ..it is important to put the emphasis on adult-learning skills and not just isolated skills. It is essential to present a syllabus, scheme of work, course check-list, and to ensure a cohesion of course team-work. The team has to look at the needs of these students, rather than having a system of whoever has free timetables being put into teaching on the Bridging Course.
> (HMI Report, 1985)

I was grateful that the HMI had become aware of the ad hoc manner in which staff were selected for this area. My greatest problem, as course tutor, was in having over a third of the course team made up of part-time lecturers who were only in college one or two days a week. The remainder of the course team were lecturers for whom this area constituted just one or two hours a week from their teaching programme. In colleges where courses for students with special needs have been devised and resourced, there is invariably a course team of two or three lecturers whose full-

time job it is to teach students with special needs. As I was appointed as liaison officer and only expected to oversee the smooth assimilation of students with disabilities onto existing courses, a full-time teaching responsibility had not been envisaged, nor, certainly, the need for a full-time course team. However, within the inappropiate structure in which I found myself, I endeavoured to improve the situation for those students whose needs we were to serve.

Curriculum Development

In the 1983-1984 Bridging Course the goal of O level attainment had superceded student need. As O level gave way to general education, the scope for individual programming widened. Jane, for example, who had attended O level Art classes part-time from Hillcroft during 1983-1984, was offered the opportunity for integration into A level Art classes as well as the City & Guilds 365 Office Practice option, within her programme on the Bridging Course. She rejected the A level Art, despite her evident capability. This suggests that functional integration, especially at post-16 level, cannot be forced. Jane felt relaxed in the City & Guilds group, but overwhelmed in the Art class. She was insecure when faced with competition. Mark, who enjoyed Computer Skills, was integrated into regular classes with Engineering students, in addition to his weekly class on the course. Kay, Pat and Jane attended Floristry classes with Sandy Green, and were assimilated into the group as successfully as Carol and Clare had been. I had tried as much as possible through 1984 and 1985, to accommodate individual students needs, yet this was within the restrictions of college and department. I knew that had the ideal situation been available, I would have preferred to have integrated all students with special needs into course which had open access, both physically and in the level o

participation allowed. However, this would have required a very different institution, and I was having to work within the situation in which I found myself.

Community Experience

We looked to external developments. The curriculum change which had started at Hillcroft in 1982 was well established by 1985. It offered much broader scope for the school-leavers, including, for example, weekly visits to Milton Road Day Centre in which members worked with school-leavers in a co-operative venture. Every Monday was thus spent in cooking, hairdressing, painting, gardening, shopping, computer practices, discussion and party or disco preparation. Members could decide what to suggest to the school-leavers and they would work together, the older group often able to support and guide the younger. Several important needs of both groups were being fulfilled in this process: the need to become as independent as possible; the need to develop self-advocacy and be able to direct one's own life; and the need to extend creative interests so that life would become richer and more fulfilling. I felt that these needs should also be fulfilled at Fraser College by encouraging increased independence, active participation in the life of the college community, and development of a wide range of creative interests. Both day centres were very interested in developing self-advocacy and we were to learn from them.

At Milton Road I attended a meeting at which I presented Kate with a prize for her outstanding application in English classes on the Bridging Course. The meeting was chaired by a member, a shy girl, who stuttered and looked down often but was given complete authority to control the debate, including any contributions from staff, and who gradually gained in confidence. I was very impressed by the way in which everyone was encouraged

to say what they felt, without embarrassment about their difficulty in using oral communication, or their lack of practice in public speaking. The mood was one of confidence and relaxed, purposeful debate. I was aware that many of the members might be too overawed to speak in public in another arena, but I felt this was valuable experience which would develop confidence.

At Highfield Hall the members were taught Cookery for two separate and distinct purposes: to enable them to live as independently as possible and to enjoy cooking as a recreational activity. I felt that this was an excellent distinction, as most of us can appreciate these separate areas of cooking, the one for survival and the other for pleasure, but so often, in rehabilitation programmes the emphasis is upon the practical task rather than the pleasure. When I visited Highfield Hall, a member with a visual handicap was being prepared for entry into a residential home. She needed to learn to do as much as she could herself, including basic kitchen tasks. Another member was preparing to bake a special cake for a coming birthday party. All such occasions were celebrated at the centre, with the members doing all the catering and preparation. I saw both these occupations as fulfilling needs to be independent and to be a participating member of an active community.

At Grasswick College the Daily Living Unit was designed to develop skills for living. It was set out like a spacious home to accommodate students in wheelchairs, with kitchen area, living room area, bedroom and bathroom areas. The students learn to develop proficiency in the skills which they will need to live at Waterloo House hostel: choosing a menu, using the washing machine, budgeting for nutritious food, using labour-saving methods and becoming familiar with adaptions to enable a student in a wheelchair to turn on taps and see inside a saucepan.

Teaching methods are geared both to the needs of the student and to their educational abilities.

Sharing Skills

In visiting the school, college, hostel and day centres from which our students were drawn, I was able to understand more of their needs and to adapt the curriculum accordingly. I invited staff teaching on the Bridging Course to visit these institutions with me, and over the years since 1983 several visits have been made. The vice principal of Fraser College visited Hillcroft school-leavers class and Grasswick College. Four staff teaching on the course visited Hillcroft in the Summer term of 1984 and another four in 1985. The Cookery teacher from the Bridging Course visited Grasswick College, Waterloo House and both day centres with me. This was to gain particular significance in 1985-1986, when she started teaching the City and Guilds Preliminary Cookery Course with a group of students drawn from these sources.

Understanding Needs

Whilst I had explained the educational implications of different disabilities to members of staff, I found that, in several cases they needed to actively experience the learning processes of the students before they could begin to adapt curriculum. I found this particularly true when they were teaching students with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, who made up a substantial proportion of Bridging Course participants. The cocktail party verbal skill, to which Anderson and Holgate testify, made hidden learning problems all the more confusing to inexperienced staff. I would like to take Susan as an example of a student with this disability because she was on the Bridging Course for two years so I had an opportunity to learn a good deal about her, and she presented many of the characteristic features

of spina bifida and hydrocephalus. She would chatter with animation and give the impression that she had a sophisticated level of understanding. Yet, when asked questions in class, she had no idea of how to respond. Her eyes appeared to glaze after a period of about ten minutes and she was evidently unable to concentrate beyond very short spells.

She was in a frustrating position on the course, in that she found cognitive areas very difficult, and so dropped-out of Science and struggled with Maths, yet she also found practical tasks very complex. When she came to Fraser College, she told us that she had been on a dress-making course where she had made a skirt unaided. Once the Home Economics lecturer had asked her to make a simple garment in needlework classes, she realised that Susan could not possibly have completed a skirt without considerable help. Susan had perceptual and spatial problems which made the simplest tasks difficult for her. If she was threading stitches on an embroidery cloth she kept taking too few or too many stitches, missing holes, or going off at a tangent. She simply could not see when she was making a mistake. Her tolerance of failure was severely limited and after unthreading her stitches more than once, she wanted to abandon the project altogether. In a whole year on the Needlework Course Susan was unable to sustain herself to complete one single project she had started.

Susan told us she loved music and played the piano, yet she found counting beats and following rhythm very confusing, and her lack of concentration and perserverance were obstacles to progress. When the Music lecturer asked Susan to draw notes inside the lines she had drawn for her, Susan was unable to keep within the lines and unable to count the correct number of notes, although there were only five. Susan enjoyed English classes and

would write long stories in a very broad, sprawling hand. She liked reading love stories, and was happy to lose herself in fiction. Her written work could be colourful and lively but was always performed with great haste and carelessness. Susan hated being asked to polish work, and to spend time on revision. Her written English was at about a nine year old level, and Maths more like a six year old level, as she became confused at the most basic concepts and just refused to try. The Maths lecturer went over and over basic arithmetic with Susan, and could not understand why she totally failed to grasp the ideas. Despite her learning problems, Susan was unable to understand her limitations and set herself completely unrealistic goals, like taking on O level English or becoming a nursery nurse. She appeared unable to assess her actual capabilities in relation to her unrealised wishes. In this respect she was to suffer notable disappointment and some depression.

At seventeen, Susan was emotionally more like an average nine year old, and needed constant reassurance and adult support. Her motivation was dulled by loss of interest in subject areas which she found difficult. Even the independent living skills associated with her daily life at Waterloo House were tedious chores to her. The Home Economics lecturer tried to make cookery relevant to her but she found tasks such as mixing, rolling out pastry, drying up dishes, and slicing vegetables difficult and boring, and she made little effort to improve her skills. Susan wanted to make friends among the able-bodied students but found that responding to their conversation was taxing and so fell into silence with them. Her emotional needs were still at a very demanding, egocentric level, which could be sympathetically handled by mature adults but not so readily by her peer group. She gained tremendous support from Mary and Kathy and would spend

hours having private consultations with them in the welfare room. They were both mothers of adolescent children and made Susan's college life more bearable by their good humour and sympathetic understanding.

I felt that Susan was able to mature and develop skills at Fraser College but that it took us some time to respond to her particular needs. We had to work at developing those areas in which she experienced success. She was a pretty young woman so we encouraged her to make the most of her good looks and to develop a social life. We encouraged her to participate in college debate and she reluctantly became Student Rep. in the Students' Union. We fostered her creative and social interest whilst avoiding those skills which she found difficult to perform.

The areas of self-advocacy, independence and recreational interests were very important to Susan in helping her to gain the maximum benefit from her life in the community. She was determined to be as independent as possible and hoped to move eventually from Waterloo House into a sheltered flat of her own. A subject-based curriculum is clearly inappropiate for someone like Susan, with its focus upon the cognitive and psycho-motor skills which she finds so difficult. A curriculum designed around the needs of the student group should enable students like Susan to develop at their own pace, within their areas of strength, and to their long-term benefit as participants in an integrated community.

Chapter 20

EXPERIENCING CHANGES 1984-1986

Chapter 20 discusses the changes which occured as a result of the integration scheme. I examine, in some detail, the process by which a mainstream lecturer developed skills and techniques to teach students with diverse learning difficulties. The casual alteration of a programme, which deprived the Bridging Course of one of its most valuable lecturers, is examined as an example of genuine lack of understanding, at administrative level, of the importance of maximising teaching skill. I discuss the impact of changing staff personnel upon Fraser College and on development for students with special educational needs. As I suggested in my introductory section, the value of a qualitative methodology, approached as a participant-observer, is that subtle changes, developing imperceptably over a period of months, can be recorded and evaluated to offer an enhanced understanding of community interaction.

Integration is a slow process, uncomfortable and uneven, vulnerable to external factors and demanding response. Despite a difficult beginning, the integration scheme gradually produced changes. I will recount a series of incidents which occurred over a period of two years and which illustrate the impact of the process of integration on the individual protagonists. It was not until sufficient time had passed, in which the educational needs of students on the Bridging Course became apparent, that teaching methods altered.

Learning Realistic Expectations

Judy Clarke had been teaching Home Economics at Fraser College for seventeen years when she first became a participant in the Bridging Course team. Her teaching experience had been with nursery nurses, dentistry students, florists, and other

course groups within the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry where she was used to expecting high standards of culinary skill. However, she had also taught students from the Training Workshop attached to the Community Unit including students with learning difficulties, behavioural problems and sensory disabilities. She had enjoyed teaching this group over a number of years, so had become familiar with adapting teaching method to suit special needs. When asked to teach cookery and needlework to students with physical disabilities on the Bridging Course, she readily agreed. Despite her valuable past experiences there were two distinct problems with Judy's initial approach to the students, both of which hindered understanding.

Judy, like many other mainstream lecturers, assumed a clear distinction between students with learning difficulties and those with physical handicaps, whilst she found it difficult to reconcile her high standards of food preparation with the severe physical limitations presented by some of the group. This meant that in the early stages of the course, Judy tended to expect far too much of the students, like asking them to prepare a three course meal within two hours. Her other students, including those she had taught from the Training Workshop, had been able to work with reasonable speed and she regarded the tasks she was setting as quite appropiate. When we had reached a stage where the staff - Judy, myself, Kathy and Mary - were doing most of the practical work in order to get the meal prepared on time, while the students could only watch passively, I decided we had to do something. I asked Grasswick's Home Economics tutor and staff from Waterloo House to come to Fraser College to meet us so that we could discuss teaching methods together.

This meeting, in the Summer term of 1984, proved to be the first of several fruitful ventures on to each others home bases.

At this early stage, however, I was aware that Judy felt threatened. She was a very experienced lecturer, yet new to students with physical handicaps. Some of the staff from Waterloo House were young and inexperienced. She naturally might have disregarded their advice as being that of novices. Pat Green, Home Economics tutor from Grasswick, was both experienced and expert in this field, but her guidance was at odds with Judy's specialist training and habitual approach. Pat suggested that it might be a practical idea to plan teaching sessions over two separate stages. We could, for example, make a pizza base one week and freeze it until the following week when the students would make the pizza topping. In this way, the students were able to complete the work themselves in simple, slow stages. Judy found this idea quite unpalatable. She felt that it was a contradiction of all she had been taught in Home Economics to prepare meals in weekly stages, rather than set a task for a lesson which is completed within a set time and with an end result. Staff from Waterloo House openly acknowledged the considerable use made of frozen food and convenience meals by their young residents. They defended their practice by suggesting that it enabled the young people to cope unaided, where as, if they tried to always use fresh food, they would need assistance. For those in wheelchairs and with the use of only one hand, peeling potatoes, scraping carrots and chopping cabbage is a laborious and potentially dangerous chore, while cooking frozen peas or heating baked beans is relatively easy. Judy found her allegiance to fresh foods and nutritious meals in conflict with the need for convenience and could not accept this approach with any degree of commitment.

In illustrating how early discussions developed I am in no way wishing to suggest that Judy was wrong in failing to accept

new approaches on first encounter. I want to show how teaching methods developed in reality within this particular context. I found that it took over a year before Judy had grown to understand the needs of these students to such a degree that she initiated a new teaching approach herself. I must emphasise that this was a lecturer who was committed to these students, and for whom they became extremely important. I learnt that it is very difficult for experienced practitioners to change their habitual methods before they feel the need to change themselves.

The two principal reasons for Judy Clarke's eventual change in teaching method were an increased familiarity with the students, whereby she began to understand their learning difficulties, and an understanding of their needs, developed through visits to their centres, hostels and college bases. When Judy visited Waterloo House she was shown around the adapted kitchens by Jenny, Pam and Susan. Jenny prepared a lunch of coffee and sandwiches for Judy and me on one visit. This simple act took her a full half an hour and, by the time Jenny had pushed the lunch through from the kitchen to the lounge on her special trolley, she was exhausted. Such observations of student capabilities and domestic difficulties were invaluable supplements to classroom observations at Fraser College. On a visit to Grasswick College, Pat Green showed us how students worked with simple kitchen adaptations. We saw students with more severe physical disabilities than those on the Bridging Course who were able to make simple, nutritious dishes, like cheese on toast. Pat showed us the books which students kept in which they recorded simple supper dishes. She stressed that it was more important that they learned how to feed themselves adequately than learned how to make extras like cakes and casseroles. She suggested that Judy could supplement the work

done at Grasswick by doing a term on Casseroles with the class. A member at Milton Road Centre, who was one of the most successful students in Cookery classes on the 1983-1984 Bridging Course, asked Judy and me to morning coffee at the snack bar she was then running at the centre. Her attendance on the course had given her the confidence to establish the snack bar. At Hillfield Hall, Judy and I were invited to morning coffee by our students and asked for our advice on the kitchen planning and catering arrangements. We, in turn, asked the students from Hillfield what they wanted to learn in Cookery classes.

By the end of the Summer term of 1985, Cookery was becoming a popular option on the Bridging Course. As the HMI visit in that Summer term had criticised the subject-based emphasis within the Bridging Course, we looked for a more appropiate syllabus than the inflexible traditional model. A member of staff in the department found an outline of the City and Guilds Preliminary Cookery Certificate and suggested that Judy and I might be interested in adopting this syllabus. It seemed ideally designed for the needs of our student group, and we carefully interviewed students for the 1985-1986 session, to ensure that they would gain maximum benefit from the course. Eight students were selected, on the basis of their ability to relate practical needs to understanding of basic nutritional and housekeeping background. Four of these students were school-leavers - three from Hillcroft and one from a neighbouring school for delicate children - and four were mature students - three from Highfield Hall and one from Milton Road Centre. The course aims related to self-advocacy, independence and a general extension of skills, and the syllabus was open to interpretation by the course tutor to suit the particular student group. Judy and I worked together to outline a programme which we thought might be appropiate. We

prepared the lessons for the first term, following a sequence of progressively more difficult tasks which we considered would be useful for the students.

After the first three lessons I realised that the students were unable to keep up the pace we had established, and that we would be faced with the same problem of doing the work ourselves while they watched, unless we revised our plans. I asked Judy if we could both meet, with Kathy and Mary, to discuss the progress of the course. Together, we were able to critically examine our approach and agree on applying modifications which involved establishing attainable goals. By this stage, Judy was not only receptive to advice but was committed to modifying what she understood had been unrealistic objectives. She was prepared to be both flexible and to work as a team. Judy designed several lessons on Snacks by helping the students to choose interesting and nutritious toppings to grill on toast. We decided that a detailed tour of the kitchen was important, to ensure that students knew, not only where everything was kept, but also the names of most items of equipment. We realised that many of the group, both young and mature students, had been used to having everything done for them, and were both unfamiliar with planning and preparing meals and afraid of ovens, grills and electrical equipment. The modifications meant that students were responsible for the whole process of their work. This included collecting equipment from accessible cupboards, referring to their recipe, working through each stage that had been demonstrated to them and being responsible, with a partner, for clearing up and putting away equipment. As a course team we were constantly assessing and moderating the course content and student progress. Both Judy and I felt that the students on the Preliminary Cookery course gained significant benefit from our

being able to structure the curriculum around their needs.

As well as involving practical cooking tasks, the course included some theoretical background which entailed an introduction to nutrition, dental hygiene, and learning to use a microwave and food mixer. We also went out into the community for shopping and budgeting, and to visit the Naidex Exhibition. In return we invited in guest chefs and outside speakers, entertained guests to lunch and held coffee mornings for relatives and friends. We worked in conjunction with the day centres and the parents of the school-leavers, so that skills learnt at college would be applied in daily life. The course was designed to extend independence, increase self-confidence and enhance enjoyment in the preparation of food. At the end of the first year, in July 1986, the external examiner visited, stayed for lunch with the students and passed all who completed the course, awarding three of them Distinctions. Two students had been unable to complete the course because of ill-health and prolonged absence. The progress of the successful students had been actively encouraged by staff at Hillfield Hall, where they had been practising the skills they were learning. Judy Clarke had been able to successfully adapt her approach.

Losing Exceptional Skills

As I have already established, I regarded Jim Shaw as an exceptionally successful lecturer within the Bridging Course team, so that, after the 1983-1984 academic year, I asked him to continue to teach the class in 1984-1985. He readily agreed, as he enjoyed the class and was interested in the students. Several part-time students elected to take the Computer Skills class in 1984-1985 because of their agreeable rapport with Jim in 1983-1984, or because they had heard good reports of him from other members of their centres. I planned the course with Jim in

mind, accepting eleven students into that option.

In September 1984, I was told that the Department of Engineering was no longer servicing the Department of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry. The Department of Environmental Health and Science was servicing it instead, so this meant that we would no longer have Jim Shaw as our Computer lecturer but a member of this department. This had been entirely a management decision (that is, it had been arranged between the Principal and Heads of Departments) and there had been no opportunity for feedback of any kind from lecturers teaching within the departments. The first we all heard of it was when our timetables were presented in September. This surely says something of the operation of an Equal Opportunity Policy in this institution.

Jim was disappointed and said he would still like to do the class. He was not teaching at the period designated for the class on our timetable so I wanted to ask if we could arrange for him to keep the group. I felt so strongly about this position that I went to see the Principal and explained to him that Jim was exceptional with the group and that I was anxious to keep him as part of the course team. Whilst the Principal was pleased to hear that I found Jim such a success with my students, he suggested that the replacement, a newly appointed lecturer, would be just as satisfactory. I protested that, as the new lecturer had only just been appointed and would not be taking up post until January, this left my students with a series of supply lecturers through the Autumn term. At that stage, we had had three different lecturers in the first three weeks of the Autumn term, and the group were already saying how much they missed Jim. The Principal, whilst sympathetic, offered no solution to what appeared to be an irresolvable situation.

As a result, we had to endure a further series of supply lecturers throughout that term. However capable they were, by the time they had grown to understand the needs of the group the one hour class was completed. They were having to rely heavily on the support of Mary and Kathy, who understood the needs of students but became confused with the technology. Three of the group of eleven students dropped out. In 1983-1984 no students from the Bridging Course had dropped out of Computer Skills except Susan, who was bored by the subject and not the manner of delivery. Not only did three students leave the course but the remainder grumbled about the loss of Jim and said that they felt they would have progressed much better had he still been with them. I felt angry about this incident because I knew that skills such as Jim possessed were unusual and to be maximised rather than wasted and I felt that another group of students, especially those on an advanced course, would not have tolerated the series of supply lecturers. I regarded the treatment of our group as a reflection of our low status and lack of power, for our students were neglected yet unwilling or unable to protest.

Changing Departmental Heads

Whilst Clare Todd had been a supportive and enthusiastic head of department, she only stayed at Fraser College for eighteen months before moving into Her Majesty's Inspectorate. In September 1984, Ruth Short started as Head of Health, Hairdressing and Floristry. She was passed the legacy of the under-financed Bridging Course. It was fortuitous that Ruth was not only committed to students with special needs (having had some experience in this area in her previous post as well as a young relative with severe learning difficulties) but was also willing and able to fight for resources on our behalf. I emphasise the element of luck involved because it reflects the

insecurity of such a model. Had an unsympathetic head of department replaced Clare Todd, there would have been no representative of students with special needs in a post of sufficient seniority to affect policy. Whilst the Vice Principal included students with special needs among his responsibilities, and was always supportive of our cause, he had many other distractions. Representation was needed from a senior lecturer responsible for students with special needs, including students with physical disabilites, to ensure continuity of commitment.

Pre-Vocational Education

It is ironical that despite John Cook's insistence, in the meetings of 1982, on the value of a pre-vocational training for students who were not appropriately served by the predominantly academic curriculum offered at Fraser College, it was not until January 1985, three years later, that the opportunity to develop this area of work arose. The reception which the Pre-Vocational lecturer received was predictably unco-operative as it challenged the high status of work at Fraser College.

An attempt to compensate for the neglect of pre-vocational work at Fraser College was met with a combination of apathy and hostility. In January 1985 a senior lecturer took up his appointment at Fraser College to be responsible for Pre-Vocational Education, an area already well established at most colleges of further education, but largely ignored by Fraser College. The City and Guilds 365 course had been established with local comprehensive school links, and CPVE was being prepared with collaborative school/college programmes. This lecturer found it extremely difficult to initiate enthusiasm and commitment from staff at Fraser College for this area of development. Many regarded it as low status, poorly paid work, with ill-motivated students, who might present additional

problems. The challenge of designing curriculum to suit individual needs was not appealing to those who were content to follow th examination syllabuses which they had habitually pursued. The college was not desperate for courses because of the closure of sections of traditional work but rather the reverse. It was too successful with traditional work and could only squeeze in the pre-vocational area. Not surprisingly, the most committed and enthusiastic staff came largely from the Community Unit, where they were aware of the needs of a neglected minority. It took some time, and changes of senior staff, before the pre-vocational area was established in Fraser College, and links with schools for CPVE programmes were in operation.

It was much easier to establish this area of work at Spencer College where it was part of the college brief, staff were committed to serving the needs of their students and CPVE was seen as a means of fulfilling these needs. Caution over low status and problem students was moderated at Spencer College where the courses were geared to the needs of students rather than to their status. It is significant that, while CPVE only operated on a part-time basis at Fraser College, it was established as a full-time course at Spencer College. Yet however tentative it might be, this change of course provision at Fraser College was relevant to the process of integration as it provided the lower rungs for progress, offered part-time integration for pupils with disabilities from Newcross who attended City and Guilds 365 and introduced CPVE as an opportunity for integration in the future.

Chapter 21

STUDENT PROGRESS: 1983-1986

In this chapter I examine the progress of students with disabilities attending Fraser College between 1983 and 1986. I discuss the progression of two students, Michael and Peter, from the Bridging Course to full-time participation in a mainstream two-year course; the value of a Link Course for two sixth-form students, Penny and Wayne; and the difficulty of transferring support services from sheltered day care provision into mainstream further education. I relate incidents which illustrate social experiences, the development of self-confidence and progression to community living. The status of students and staff with disabilities in Fraser College is examined in describing the increase in security arrangements which benefited the majority whilst severely impeding the disabled minority. I illustrate the image presented by the student journal of disabled students and offer examples of writing by students on the Bridging Course.

Overall, chapter 21 presents a focus on the students who were recipients of integration: their development, reactions, feedback into the community and their impact on college life.

One of the most powerful criticisms which HMI directed at the provision in Fraser College was the limited opportunities available for progression from the Bridging Course. Clearly, such course provision should be seen as the lower rungs on a ladder which led into further educational opportunities. Colleges such as Brixton and Southwark were aware of this need and provided the quantity of lower rungs leading onwards towards advanced course provision. Fraser College offered few lower rungs, and wide gaps in provision. It is not surprising, therefore, that few students with special school backgrounds,

were able to progress within the college. However, despite this constraint, progression to increased participation in the community was evident in many cases. Michael and Peter were, at least, two examples of students who had bridged the gap from special schooling to progression within further education.

Full Time Participation

Michael and Peter had gone from their year on the Bridging Course in 1983-1984 to a two year course in the Engineering Department in Electronics and Micro-technology. They were in a group of about twelve boys of similar age and, apart from being in wheelchairs, were no different from the rest of their peer group. They were expected to do the same academic and practical work and to keep up with lecture notes. The course demanded regular attendance and reasonable application. Despite his delicate health, Michael was rarely absent and Peter was encouraged by him. Although they were friendly with the rest of the group they were inseparable companions, to the exclusion of all others. The special needs suite was a barrier to their further social integration, in that they always went to sit with Mary and Kathy whenever they were out of lessons. There they had warm companionship, hot drinks, accessible toilet facilities and pleasant surroundings. Mary and Kathy were excellent company and Michael and Peter shared their sense of humour. Jim Shaw often called in there to chat to them. It was, undoubtedly, a more convivial setting that the grim student common room.

In November, 1984, there was a power failure in the tower block when Michael and Peter were in class on the third floor. After waiting for fifteen minutes to see if the power would return, six of their classmates, with the assistance of their lecturers, carried them down the unlit, stone steps, in their wheelchairs. They were careful, steady and good-humoured.

Michael had an electric wheelchair which was very heavy and Peter weighed about fifteen stone. This co-operative support was offered without request, by fellow classmates, who wanted to help their peers. It offered dramatic contrast with the hostilities of 1982-1983.

During the first year of the course, Peter and Michael found that because one of the students always delayed the tail-lift bus, on collection, they arrived ten or fifteen minutes late for their first class and the lecturer had complained. They wanted equality with other students and regarded this delay, which was not of their making, to be unfair. With explanation to the family concerned, this matter was resolved. It was important that Peter and Michael should have been self-advocates for what they regarded as their right. Only this time it was a student with disabilities who was creating problems. They worked steadily and passed their preliminary exams in March, 1986, whilst some fellow students were asked to leave the course because of poor performance. Michael was awarded a prize for outstanding application at the prizegiving in May, 1986, and his proud parents were able to see him receive this honour, after recalling his endurance test in that first Autumn term of 1982. Despite beginning the 1985 Autumn term by being absent for seven weeks with a broken leg, Michael had managed to cope with the work demanded of him. He went into open employment on leaving Fraser College, and is coping well with daily attendance at a job which employs his computing and engineering skills. When I recall Michael's reflection on the sheltered workshop which he contemplated attending after Stephen left to go there in December 1983, I feel that he represents a great success in this scheme and a very good reason for providing access at Fraser College. Michael did not want to go to a sheltered workshop, but wanted to

study and go into open employment. Even if there are very few Michaels within the system, access must surely be provided for them.

The Value of a Link

Penny and Wayne were in the Sixth Form of Newcross Comprehensive School. Penny had hemiplegic cerebral palsy, and walked with two sticks. Wayne had Duchenne muscular dystrophy and was in a manual wheelchair which left him dependent upon assistance. They came to Fraser College in the Spring term of 1985 to attend the City and Guilds 365 course on one day every week. Penny chose the Office Practice option. Some of these classes took place in the Community Unit, which involved her having to cope with steep stone steps and being unable to participate in the coffee break which her peers enjoyed. They were able to walk quickly to the college canteen, which was a fifteen minute trek in all weathers for Penny. The Office Practice lecturer was distressed that suitable classroom location had not been considered prior to Penny starting the course. Wayne selected Building as one of his options. This involved Brick-laying, during which session he could be nothing more than a passive observer as his arms were too weak to even lift a brick. He had to attend one option in an annexe a mile from Fraser College's main building in the morning, and then attend another option in the main building in the afternoon. School transport would leave him at the annexe in the morning, but he was regularly forgotten as his class surged over to college in the lunch hour.

Up to an hour after the others had gone, I used to be contacted and asked if I, or one of my welfare assistants, would collect him. Whilst his course tutor suggested that the other boys should be expected to push him over, this was unrealistic.

In theory it might be considered ideal for them to take on this responsibility for a classmate. In practice, with no member of staff to supervise, who would accept responsibility should his frail body be inadvertently tipped out of the wheelchair on the bumpy, uneven ride over to college?

These examples illustrate that disability cannot be ignored in integration. Appropriate options should have been discussed at initial stages rather than enabling Wayne to select an option in which he could not participate, and later dropped. Why were the location of classes not determined in relation to student needs to avoid the embarrassment and isolation of these students? Ignoring evident needs can never be deemed an integrative process.

Inadequate Awareness

Molly dropped out of college almost before she started. She was a Cypriot woman in her forties, who had hemiplegia and a speech impediment as a result of a road accident. Molly could only walk very slowly and with great effort. She enrolled to attend Cookery classes on the Bridging Course. Her key-worker from Milton Road Centre came with her on the first occasion, but, after that, shortage of staff meant that a member of staff brought her as far as the college and then returned to collect her. Molly was very anxious and needed constant reassurance. On just her fourth visit, she arrived at class in a distressed state, having had to wait for a lift to arrive and, after walking slowly, failed to reach the toilet in time. She was so upset by her accident and the subsequent embarrassment it caused that she never returned to college.

I went to the toilets as soon as she had told us of the accident and, in cleaning up after Molly, I became fully aware of the difficulty in social integration. Far from expressing

sympathy for someone who had an obvious physical disability, mainstream students who were in the toilet area at the time were outraged that she had been in the premises, and referred to her in most disparaging terms. The disgust they felt for the unpleasantness which Molly had unwittingly created was reflected in their rejection of her. While such accidents are daily occurences in special schools, special colleges, hostels and day centres where the facilities and staff are readily available to cope with them, they are socially segregating within current mainstream institutions like Fraser College.

Causing a Scene

One afternoon, in March 1985, three full-time Bridging Course students came to to tell me that one of the part-time students had made an embarrassing scene which had angered them. This girl, who had cerebral palsy and walked with sticks, had placed her coat over a chair in the canteen while she went to the toilet. As the canteen becomes very crowded in the lunch hour, some able bodied students had started to sit and eat their dinners in that area, one sitting on her chair. When she returned she was upset and angrily told the student that it was already her chair and he would have to move as otherwise she would have nowhere to sit. This embarrassed the group from the Bridging Course, as this particular boy was a friend of theirs, and he looked irritated by what he evidently considered an unnecessary fuss. As the students told me:

> ..She gives us a bad name. We have to work here all the time. She's only part time. We have our reputation to think of..

I had a delicate role to play here, balanced between comforting the girl, who was very distressed, and sympathising with the very real grievance felt by the other students.

What struck me forceably was that it was because the girl

was disabled that she damaged their reputation, the implication being that disabled people are a homogeneous group and they all behave in the same way. I found this a salutary experience to realise that reputation is such an important feature of social acceptability, when you are the minority group and feel the need to assimilate. I regarded each student as an individual who set their own standards, yet they perceived themselves as labelled within this community. Returning to Goffman's (1968) description of playing the part of the cripple (p.135), which I discuss in my introductory section, the inference from this incident is that, for some young people, for whom peer-group acceptance is critically important, the need to play a suitably subdued role is intense.

Gaining in Confidence

Not all student experiences at Fraser College were negative or painful, however, as the following descriptions indicate. For several people with disabilities, this experience provided a platform for progression.

Mary was in her late forties and had attended a special school in the early 1950s where she had been prevented from doing any practical tasks for herself. Her hemiplegia and mild speech impediment would be regarded as no barrier to independence now, but her education reflected another approach to disability. These early experiences had left Mary with a lack of confidence and self-esteem. She came to the cookery class with great eagerness and apprehension. From the beginning we found her an able, perceptive and industrious student. She soon learnt to adapt her techniques to suit her hemiplegia, and was always willing to give advice and assistance to other, less capable, students. After attending the course for eighteen months, Mary felt sufficiently confident to leave, in order to devote her

energies to establishing and running the Milton Road snack bar, where she would regularly take orders for twenty filled rolls for lunch. The success which she achieved at college enabled Mary to progress to a more central participation in the life of the centre.

Tom had attended Art classes with nursery nurses in the Spring and Summer terms of 1983, before going on to take O level Art on the Bridging Course in 1983-1984. He was severely physically disabled, in that he had spastic quadreplegia, no speech and little motor control. Tom did, however, have a lively mind, sense of humour, artistic flair and determination. This, and his devotion to the Art lecturer, gained him a Grade B O level, despite doubts from some of his Grasswick staff at the kindness of putting him through the competition of exams. Both Tom, and Kate, to be described next, were determined, mature personalities, who set their own goals. I could see no reason why I, as course tutor, should have shielded them from potential failure when they wished to set challenges for themselves. I see it rather as a debilitating process to deny people with disabilities the chance to fail which we all take. In the event, Tom's success was a triumph for him and led to his enrolling at an Art college near his home, to continue his studies.

Kate was similarly severely handicapped by quadreplegic cerebral palsy, with no speech and restricted motor control. In addition she had athetoid movements which meant her limbs were in constant motion. When Kate came with her key worker from Milton Road to ask to join English classes, she was nervous and most anxious that she would be too difficult for any teacher to communicate with. She was a most sensitive student, who wanted to please the lecturer and had very clear likes and dislikes of people and things. She was a very independent, single-minded

young woman in her late twenties with a passionate love of poetry and a desire to gain O level English. Although I explained to Kate that this was a very taxing exam, which called for rigorous use of grammar, she was determined to set herself this goal. Both her other English lecturer and I worked hard with Kate, setting her exercises for homework, which she did most diligently. She was a model student to teach and we both grew very fond of her. Working laboriously with her Possum typewriter, it took Kate several hours to complete what would have taken most people half an hour. Despite her great efforts, including an exam day from 9 o'clock till 5.30 p.m. of unremitting work, Kate was to be given an F grade. Her disappointment was enormous and her depression considerable, yet I would maintain that Kate had progressed in her development. She had deliberately set herself a challenge in which no allowance (beyond a time extension) had been set for her considerable disabilities. She had permitted herself the experience of failure within mainstream, and demonstrated courage in so doing.

Pat had spina bifida and hydrocephalus and displayed moderate learning difficulties. Within these limitations, Pat was one of the most successful students, in terms of developing independence and self-advocacy. She was a self-contained girl who rarely followed the crowd, and was more adventurous than we had anticipated in finding her own way around the college. Pat had been regarded as a loner at Hillcroft, but was able to progress into a confident young woman during her period at Fraser College, as she took herself where she wanted to go and particularly enjoyed integration with the Floristry students. Leaving the small special school to come to the impersonal college proved to be a liberating experience for Pat.

Jenny had been at Grasswick College for three years before attending Fraser College part-time while at Waterloo House. Her moderate learning difficulties and immaturity have already been described, but despite her problems Jenny progressed while attending Fraser College over a two year period, to the extent that the specialist careers officer, on her annual visit, remarked on her increased independence and improved alertness. This progression could be measured in small stages. Jenny, at twenty one, had learnt to get her own lunch in the canteen, to suck her thumb less frequently in public, to last out until 4 o'clock without falling asleep over her desk, to remember to bring back library books, to reach appointments on time and generally take more responsibility for her own actions. This progression in confidence and social skill helped Jenny enter a YTS scheme after college with some degree of assurance. She needed considerable individual support on this scheme, without which staff suggested she would certainly have dropped out. However, she was able to sustain the year on YTS although, in July 1986, she is now spending most of her time in the flat at Waterloo House.

When Rachel came into the course she presented us with the challenge of a twenty three year old blind student who had never mastered Braille. She had been put off learning at school, as she experienced so much failure, and it was not until Milton Road developed her self-confidence that she felt ready to attend college. She came into maths classes every week, to learn basic decimal currency in order to help her with shopping and budgeting. The gentle approach of the Maths lecturer restored her confidence and Rachel even began to try Braille again when the RNIB Adviser visited Fraser College to see her with her mother, key worker and teaching team. It would be unrealistic tc

suggest that Rachel made dramatic or rapid progress. She had, however, become receptive to learning again, after having reconciled herself to failure, and that in itself was a triumph for Rachel and her tutors. Weekly attendance at Fraser College became a highlight of her week and an integral part of her individual programme. Learning was no longer an ordeal for Rachel and she began to adopt a more purposeful approach to life.

A Student Advocate

Mark, who had rejected the YTS Computer Skills programme, had wanted to attend Spencer College and then had to settle for Fraser College, so he was a cautious participant. He was a great advocate for the rights of disabled people and became a very popular member of the college community, where he soon settled into enjoying student life. After his year on the Bridging Course, where he was a regular attender and kept his books neatly filed, although he found written work very difficult, he wanted to attend a full-time CPVE course. However, as Fraser College was not offering a full-time course, Mark settled for a Preliminary Technical Course in the Building Department. He was one of six boys on the course, and integrated socially very well. He found all written work extremely difficult although he tended to mask this with his verbal agility. His course tutor soon realised Mark's problems and helped him to select the most suitable future option. He was steered away from the Office Practice and clerical work which he had often expressed an interest in, to community care in which he had already demonstrated considerable skill. Mark progressed in confidence, self-advocacy skills and social poise whilst at Fraser College. He was course Representative in the Student Union and was always prepared to speak up for the rights of others, despite his athetoid cerebral palsy which impeded his clarity of speech. He

mixed socially, attending parties and meetings, and becoming well known by staff and students. While many students with disabilities failed to make an effort to mix socially, Mark was assertive and gregarious, and developed in character because of it. Mark went from college to eventual employment in a community scheme where he was responsible for looking after young children with disabilities. His period at Fraser College, during which time he spent most holidays working in this scheme, fostered his independence and self assurance.

Achieving Individual Goals

Both Mark and Arnold, the student to be discussed next, taught us to associate the concept of success with individual goal-setting and social achievement rather than exclusively with progressing within academic or technical course criteria. Mark would have long-term literacy problems but his social skills were beyond those of many non-disabled students of his age. Arnold also lacked conventional academic skills but his commitment to work was outstanding and brought him notable success.

When students were originally selected for the City and Guilds Preliminary Cookery Course, Arnold was rejected on the grounds of his severely limited literacy skills. Rather than abandon the idea of the course, Arnold started taking individual English lessons at Hillfield Hall, to prepare him for entry into the course the following year. As it materialised, a student dropped out and Arnold was then offered a place, half way through the first half-term. In his late thirties, shy and reluctant to speak, and still living at home with his mother, Arnold had been used to having most meals prepared for him. He wanted to develop independence and learn new skills. Arnold worked so hard, and with such goodwill, that he was a pleasure to teach. Every dish he prepared at college he tried again at Hillfield Hall. He so

enjoyed coming to classes, both to Cookery and Drama, that he never missed a single session and was an inspiration to others. His mother visited the Cookery class and told Judy that she was so delighted that Arnold was learning to look after himself, as she planned that he would eventually live with his twin brother, who would go out to work while Arnold ran the household. Arnold was a student who surpassed our expectations of him and whose character we had underestimated. He made remarkable progress in confidence, dexterity and communication skills throughout the year, and was delighted when he received a Distinction in his final Assessment. He and his girlfriend Janet, attending the course together, were warmly supported by the enthusiasm of staff from Hillfield who were committed to their members extending their level of independence and self-esteem.

To Benefit the Majority

Some of the changes which adversely affected students with disabilities were made for the best of intentions and for the benefit of the majority, despite their detrimental results for the few. During the academic year of 1984-1985, a series of intrusions by thieves and muggers forced Fraser College to tighten up its security system. Being situated directly on the High Road and in an area of high youth unemployment only increased its vulnerability. Anyone could enter one of its many hidden entrances behind the front stairway and the recreational resources it offered were preferable to wandering the streets. It was decided that the most effective and economic way of increasing security was to place security guards at the main door and bolt all fire doors. This was acceptable to most students, who were prepared to tolerate the inconvenience of being restricted to only one entrance for the sake of improved safety. However, it was grossly inconvenient for all students with

mobility problems, specifically those in wheelchairs. Where they had previously been able to come and go through opened fire doors, which offered a degree of independence, they were then reliant upon the goodwill of caretakers, welfare assistants and myself, to run through the building and unlock the bolts from the inside. Even if it was cold, windy or raining, this could mean a fifteen minute wait outside whilst other students were being able to gain access to the building. It was a complete negation of equality of opportunity.

Mark called a meeting of his fellow students on the Bridging Course, which Molly Francis also attended. He agreed to go as representative of the group to tell the Vice Principal how intolerable they found these new arrangements. Molly gave him her full support as she too was being severely hampered by the restricted access, having to arrive late to give her first lecture some mornings, because caretakers could not be found for some ten minutes, while she waited outside the fire door. The Vice Principal was sympathetic and obviously impressed by Mark's articulate argument. He told Mark that he was already trying to improve the situation and had arranged for special coded handles to be put into the outside of the fire doors. This would enable those with disabilities to gain access from the outside, through pressing the coded number sequence. However, in order to maximise security, no students were given the code, only welfare staff, caretakers, Molly Francis and myself. Whilst this might have been considered fair, in that it included students with disabilities among the whole student body, it served to deny these students the degree of independence which they had achieved. In becoming reliant on welfare assistant or myself to give them access they were readopting a dependent status.

The full-time students resented having to ask when they

wanted to come back from the canteen and Michael and Peter simply stopped using the canteen at all, preferring instead to ask Mary or Kathy to bring sandwiches back for them, whilst they remained in the suite. They had been daily visitors to the canteen before this restriction of access, and it represented the minimal social integration in which they participated. The part-time students were no longer able to arrive in the morning or at lunch-hour and make their own way over to the canteen, classroom or hall, as appropriate. It had taken some time of careful support, confidence - building and guidance to reach the stage where they would find their own way to class. It was difficult and demoralising to wait in the cold while key workers and accompanying staff went off to look for caretakers or welfare assistants. In this one move to serve the security needs of the institution as a whole, the independence of the minority was damaged. Just as the Principal could not understand my frustration at our loss of Jim Shaw's services, or what significance that could have to the fulfilment of the students, so the college management were unaware of the damage which increased security had wrought. It was for the common good, so our students had to learn to cope with it.

The Public Image

Having examined an incident which highlighted the perception which some disabled students had of their role within the college community - namely that they wanted to assimilate with their peers and feel no sense of difference - it is useful to assess the alternative perception of their public persona. It is possible to gain an impression of their public image from the student newspaper Graffiti. In those early turbulent days, the students reported that

..We have worked hand in hand with members of NATFHE in

> getting a better deal for the handicapped students..We are still campaigning for other facilities to be installed in order for the handicapped students to integrate fully.. (Graffiti Spring 1983).

The students were caught up in the NATFHE dispute and were anxious to see adequate provisions being offered to disabled students. This political beginning distorted their perceptions of students with mobility problems for, over two years later, they were still preoccupied with access and facilities rather than illustrating an interest in individuals. When Graffiti reporters came to interview me about the Bridging Course, they wanted to present a wholly negative view, concentrating upon access. I suggested that they should interview some of the students and ask their opinions. The resulting article is a brief description of improved facilities, but mostly two interviews of students describing their experiences. This extract gives an indication of the feelings expressed:

> ..I would advise the public to treat disabled people just the same as everyone else. If they have done something wrong they should be told about it..sometimes people think disabled people should always be good-humoured, which is unrealistic and patronising. We also share normal vices..so please include us in social invitations.. (Graffiti, 1985).

I would hope that both this article and the widespread sale of the bridging course magazine Portraits, in the Summer term of 1985, helped to dispel any lingering stereotype of the disabled as a homogeneous group.

Portraits, a collection of poetry and prose written by students on the Bridging Course, was widely distributed in Fraser College and beyond, and was an opportunity for students, who found it difficult to vocalise their feelings, to communicate:

Give us a chance
To show you and this
World
That disabled people
Are not freaks,
JUST HUMAN BEINGS.

(Kate 4.3.85)

Response to Portraits was interesting. Staff and students in Fraser College, and members of associated institutions, were very impressed with the standard of work and moved by the honesty of delivery. Some, who were unfamiliar with disability other than a passive stereotype, were surprised that such perceptive and critical views were being expressed. This jarred with the Saturday flag day approach they were familiar with. Kate's poetry made a particular impact. She has a remarkable capacity for self-irony and totally rejects sentimentality. Kate described a day in her life in which she handles her severe physical disability with a light-hearted detachment. She then offers a range of poems which provide insight into her acute sensitivity, wit and imagination. I complete this chapter with Kate's words and extracts from Portraits.

I have described the impact of the integration scheme at Fraser College on other lecturers, students and on the students with disabilities. I cannot, therefore, neglect to acknowledge the impact which the period of working from 1983-1986 at Fraser College had on me. I feel privileged to have known the students I worked with and they taught me a great deal about my own unconscious stereotyping and irrational prejudices. They often displayed more courage and tenacity that I was capable of, which perhaps reflected their long experience of having to cope with adversity. I will let them speak for themselves:

> I am a young woman of twenty eight. My name is Kate and I am disabled with cerebral palsy. I have had cerebral palsy from birth but was brought up like any other child thanks to my mother and father.

Cerebral Palsy was caused through lack of air to the back of the brain and it damaged the brain, causing weakness in my body and my speech is affected. This does not mean my brain is useless and I cannot do anything for myself. I can definitely think for myself and also I can run my own life and I am my own boss.

Cerebral Palsy is not a disease and no one can catch it, and it is not a great problem to have it. I cannot walk, talk or feed myself. I think,

So what, if I cannot do these things? I can think for myself and can take any responsibility for my life. There are some people without any disability who cannot think for themselves and I feel sorry for them, but I don't feel sorry for me. At least I know what I want.

I do not have many dislikes. Here are two of my dislikes: I do not like it when people treat me like a fool or a little girl, and I don't like it when some people are dishonest and they are making out what they are not.

I enjoy life and I like to get a lot out of life. I love going to Fraser College and Milton Road Day Centre. I hope one day I will be a good writer and will earn a good living. Also I just adore going out and meeting and seeing different people.

Perhaps being disabled may cause some difficulties, but the disablement comes second and the person comes first in this portrait.

Kate

This is an essay about myself, Kate and what I do in a day.

Monday morning is always a bad morning for me, after relaxing at the weekend. I take things easy at the weekend, doing what I want to do. Then Monday comes, and it is back to reality. I usually wake up at around eight o'clock on Monday, fully awake, and I wait for my Mum to come downstairs to get me toileted, washed and, finally, dressed. It takes my Mum and me about twenty five to thirty minutes to get me ready. Nearly every morning Mum and I find something to laugh about, which makes the morning much more fun. Then I am ready to go into my wheelchair. Sometimes it takes a little while to get myself comfortable.

After this performance, I am ready for my first cup of tea of the day, and it tastes wonderful. After this beautiful break, it is back to getting myself ready for the day ahead. Mum then brushes my long hair and it is usually in a mess of tangles, but Mum always sorts my hair out. I cannot eat breakfast in the weekdays, because I think it is too early for me. So I have a raw egg in milk, with two teaspoonfuls of honey. Honey is very good for me, Mum says. Then, when it has gone down, I like another cup of tea. While I am waiting for the coach to come for me, I like listening to the radio and hearing the latest records.

Usually the coach arrives at nine thirty a.m. and we are taken to our new and modern day centre, Milton Road Centre. I usually like to get stuck in, doing my homework for college, and I do it on my Possum typewriter. Sometimes I finish my work at lunchtime. Somedays one of us will cook lunch, such as sausages and beans, or we will get rolls from the bakers. In the afternoons, I take things easier and socialise with my friends at the centre. We start to get ready for going home at quarter past three and I am indoors by a quarter to four. There is always a hot cup of tea waiting for me.

You may feel angry
With strangers
In the street,
Because they
Stare and make
Fun of me,
You may get hurt
And lose your
Temper
When someone makes
A silly remark
About me,
But you know me
And I know myself
Far better than
A passer-by,
My disability
Is only on the
Outside,
And in the inside
Of my body is a sense
Of humour
A clever and a caring
Person,
So when a person takes
The mickie out of me,
Just think of our happy life
And just turn away...

11.3.85

Kate

If you were not here
I cannot be fed,
If you were not here
I could not be toileted,
If you were not here
I could not be dressed
If you were not here
I would not be bathed
If you were not here
I would never know how
To love,
If you were not here
I would not know how
To grow,
If you were not here
I would never know
How to behave myself
In this world outside,
If you were not here
I would not know
How to care,
If you were not here
I would surely not be
Here.

4.9.84

Kate

THE ELEPHANT MAN

Your life was shattered
When you came into this
World,
No peace you had
And to hide the shyness
You put on a mask,
Those who made fun
Of you
Were so wrong,
To wreck your short
And sheltered life,

THE WEDDING

The crowd stood outside
That old church
A wide coloured rainbow
Of floppy hats could be
Seen,

The groom was in his grey
New suit looking glum and
Quite nervous
And his shoes were on
The wrong feet,

Then someone out of
The blue
Gave love and found
Much happiness,
A kiss on your cheek
From a beautiful
Woman
Gave you strength to live
So you died
With grace and honour
And these people who hurt
You,
Were, just only fools
Were, just only fools

11.9.84
(after seeing the film)

Kate

And I am sad to say
That the button-holes
Newly cut I must add
Were too big and covered
The suits
Like a baby's bib,

But just when we thought
The bride wouldn't turn up
The music played
And the groom began
To weep,

Bridesmaids were all
In pink and sugary
And one small tot
Had her finger
Up her nose
And what a sight

The old vicar did
His piece and the choir
rejoiced and gave a sigh
And the bells rang like
Big Ben,

After we toasted with
Washed out sherry
Followed by one sausage
On a stick and a cube of
Greencheese,

Quite a speech was made
Listened to by only a tot
For the rest they propped
Up the bar
And the ale was flowing,

The end came with a relief
The brooms and the pans
Came in for the last waltz
And a dead button-hole lay
Asleep on the floor

And it was just left.

24.1.85

Kate

Mark

I have curly hair and I come from the West Indies. I am very friendly and I have a good sense of humour. I am very good with kids. I am very independent, sometimes too independent. My hobby is doing voluntary work with disabled young children.

I am at Fraser College doing a General Education course. I study computers, data processing and office skills, and I enjoy it very much. I also do maths and English. I get on with my lecturers, and I try at every lesson. At college I am always on time for every lesson. I am Student Rep. for my group.

Susan

I'm very pretty. (I'm also very modest) I have black, moppish hair and big, brown eyes. I'm about five foot in height, although it is difficult to tell because I'm in a wheelchair. I'd live in trousers if I could, but I do wear skirts. I usually take ages getting myself ready. I don't know how I manage to be ready for my Dial-a-ride every morning, but I do, and yet Barry (one of the drivers) still complains. I suppose you could call me a bit of a slowcoach.

My hobbies are reading Mills and Boons and anything else I can get my hands on; going out; writing letters; listening to Lou Reed records; drinking lots of tea and collecting things. I collect empty cigarette packets, beer mats, cuddly toys, and unusual earings. I have thirty pairs of earings altogether.

I'm a very quiet and independent sort of girl, who likes to shut herself in her bedroom and listen to Lou Reed. I'm a very strong person and I never let people get away with things. I always tell people what I think.

Pat

My first day at College was very nerve-racking, because it is such a big place and it is difficult to remember what rooms to go to for each lesson. The canteen is big and noisy because there are a lot of students in there having their lunch. In the canteen that afternoon I was having my lunch, and this boy came walking in. He had a Moheekan-style haircut, dyed blue, and a skin head in squares. He had a long black coat on and skin-tight trousers. When he had finished his lunch, he found the longest way round to get back out. Mary and Kathy are two lovely Irish ladies. Mary used to work at Hillcroft School where I used to go before I came here. There is a lovely atmosphere here, because everyone is so friendly, especially Mary and Kathy but als the other students, because, if we get lost, they are always around to show us where to go.

SECTION V

CONCLUSION

Chapter 22

TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF INTEGRATION

In Section Five, the concluding section of the case study, I return to the themes of the four preceding sections, discussing them in relation to what I have learnt in the process of undertaking the research. I discuss issues in integration through describing the model which I consider most appropriate for future progression. I examine influences in further education in relation to recent developments to foster increased integration in this area. The conclusions from the case study are drawn from my reflections on my experience as a participant-observer from 1983 to 1986. Finally, I make general recommendations, for other educational institutions and local education authorities, from the specific example of the case study.

This concluding section seeks to draw the threads of arguments maintained throughout and to clarify issues which have emerged as a result of this investigation.

Chapter 22 describes an alternative model of integration to the narrowly-conceived placement model which I reject in Section One. I favour a model of integration which accepts differences, fosters consultation, extends the curriculum, shares good practice and is, generally, unconditional. I examine the continued practice of employing labels and of token integration. The need to share responsibility and actively support change is illustrated as being fundamental to providing genuinely integrated provision.

Progressing from Placement

In examining conventional models of integration and illustrating the weaknesses of a model which focuses of placement in the case study, I have learnt more of the qualities

required for integration to develop successfully, with opportunities for participation and progress. In order to develop successful integration which expands and strengthens, it needs support from borough, institutional and departmental policy. Such policy has to involve planning, resourcing and long-term commitment.

In 1979, Bradford published a directorate on The Education of Handicapped Children in Mainstream Schools, long before many LEAs had considered integration. In it they described the planning for integration of physically handicapped pupils into a community comprehensive school in 1976. They added a single-storey wing onto the school, which included a swimming pool to be used by school and local community. Eleven extra teachers were added to the comprehensive school staff - all of whom were committed to teaching children with learning difficulties, including those with physical handicaps. Of the 34 pupils with physical handicaps on roll in 1978, only 3 did not integrate in mainstream classes. Pupils were not selected on grounds of their ability to cope with existing curriculum - all the children with physical handicaps in the locality came to the school. In 1978, this included: 11 pupils with cerebral palsy; 8 with spina bifida and hydrocephalus; 5 with muscular dystrophy; 1 with thalidomide and others with various disabilities. 19 were in wheelchairs and the annual intake was estimated to be 14 pupils (Higgins, 1979).

Accepting Differences

This LEA policy enabled integration to become a participating and developing process by accepting the learning difficulties of many children with complex handicaps, by rejecting a selective system, and ensuring that teachers employed to work with this group of children would appreciate the need for curriculum modification. The population of the school as a whole

benefitted from the inclusion of extra teaching staff, with expertise in the field of specialist support, and from the addition of a new swimming pool. Through what Biklen calls a problem-solving approach, the LEA recognised the need for extra facilities and resources to ensure that the pupils with physical disabilities would become participants in the community school. Two tail-lift buses, with their driver, were available all day, so that no pupil would be excluded from school outings, through inadequate transport. Taking the whole range of disability and dependency, nurses, welfare assistants and physiotherapists were provided in situ, to maintain support. In marrying the resources of special education with the curriculum breadth and level of participation of mainstream, this example illustrates that it is possible for the community school to offer access to all pupils, without the rejection of the most dependent as in the conventional placement model.

Although I have not visited this school, I visited a high school in Rochester, New York State, which offered exactly these facilities for the full range of children with physical disabilities. No children were rejected on grounds of impracticality, and the school community shared the medical resources and swimming pool. Certainly, it was not the local school for most of the children with physical disabilities, whereas it was for many of the other students. The limitations of finance had dictated that only one high school and one elementary school in the city be adapted for pupils in wheelchairs. However, despite these disadvantages, I observed the benefits of effectively bringing in the special school from the cold. Whatever their degree of disability, these pupils were being educated in the same environment as their peers. Teachers were sharing expertise: the mystique was being eroded.

Consulting the Community

Part of a policy of accepting differences involves a high degree of consultation in the local community to assess regional needs and make and appropriate, practical response.

Derbyshire L.E.A. consulted parents, teachers, educational psychologists and voluntary organisations before they published their Review of Procedures in 1985. They wanted to know how the community felt that the LEA should respond to the 1981 Act. This procedure assists integration policy in making it the business of all interested parties, particularly parents, and allowing room for consultation before and not after policies have been drawn up. This might appear a not uncommon method of development but Booth (1983) implies that such open invitation for debate would terrify some LEA administrators. Consultation and publication in regard to policy-making is dangerous, in that it displays a commitment which then has to be adhered to, but without it, educational innovation cannot hope to succeed. If integration is to entail curriculum change and modification of teaching method - as I believe it should - then coherent policy has to be implemented from within the educational structure. Malborough School, Oxfordshire, is a clear example of such coherent policy being established from within an institutional structure which has a central ethos, staff stability and commitment and a child - centred curriculum (O'Hagan, 1985).

Extending the Curriculum

Curriculum has to relate to student needs, which means that it must extend beyond purely academic boundaries. Comprehensive education has much to learn from adult education, in relating to the capabilities and interests of all pupils, and serving the community as a whole (Booth & Potts, 1983). In Malborough School, every afternoon the pupils have a wide choice o

recreational activities in which to extend their interests and skills. Such breadth of curricula facilities equal opportunities as it releases children from the barrier of formal assessment. Pate (1978) found that a wide choice of recreational activities was valuable in extending the curriculum opportunities for slow-learners in secondary schools. Curriculum inadequacies have been highlighted in recent research which indicates that comprehensive education was failing a substantial proportion of pupils in mainstream schools (Hargreaves, 1985). If the concept of integration is to become more than a token placement of individuals within a static framework, it has to include a challenge to the system. The model which I support is one which recognises and responds to difficulties, rather than ignoring them. This recognition will include the need to respond to the growth in unemployment, which will affect many young people, and the need to understand the educational implications of specific disabilities.

Unconditional Integration

Integration by assimilation is constricting because it has to be conditional, selecting within a prescribed standard, not admitting more than a specified proportion of the minority population and adopting the ethos and curriculum values of the host institution. This form of integration serves to perpetuate discrimination, leaving the rejected minority even further depleted by such a system, as current special school populations illustrate. The process of selective integration takes the cream and retains a segregated provision to resort to if assimilation is unsuccessful. This conditional integration tends to be ad hoc and short-term as Biklen illustrates,

> ..A teacher approaches a colleague and says, how about it; will you take Jane? I think she's ready. I think she can handle it.

> If the regular class teacher agrees, we have mainstreaming. Such deals rarely bring any kind of administrative support with them.. (Biklen, 1985, p.59).

Assimilation, without recognition of needs, creates an oppressive system for the integrated minority. If the institution fails to acknowledge the need for flexible curriculum content and teaching method, when individuals fail to adapt it is then regarded as their fault and not the fault of the system (Oliver, 1986).

My ideal model of integration is Biklen's example of unconditional mainstreaming, which illustrates a future role for mainstream education:

> ..In settings where the unconditional model has been adopted, teachers and staff speak about integration and learning as correlated goals. Staff do not try to disown certain children as another staff's responsibility, nor was mainstreaming perceived as something being tried out on an experimental basis. In the eyes of staff, mainstreaming is a given of the setting, just like gym, recess, grouping of children by their ages, and a five and one half hour school day are given. In many ways what seems to make mainstreaming possible in these planned settings is not only the prior planning but also the presence of a problem solving attitude. People share an unconditional commitment to try and make it work, to discover the practical strategies to make it successful. Other factors that distinguish this form of mainstreaming from others is the degree of administrative support, the problem solving attitude throughout the administrative as well as the teaching staff, the frequency of discussions by teachers, administrators and parents on how to make mainstreaming more effective, and careful documentation within the school of progress with individual students.. (Biklen, 1985, p.60).

Like Biklen (1985) and Booth (1983) I regard the conventional role of the specialist in the integration process as both deflecting responsibility from institutional commitment, and undervaluing the caring skills of non-specialists.

Sharing Good Practice

Integration means sharing the best teachers, so that children with special educational needs are not deprived through unit or specialist restrictions. My own schoolday memories of the B stream receiving a different (and, we considered, inferior)

team of teachers than the A stream, were that the system further discriminated against us by offering less teaching expertise. However, I agree with Biklen that not all mainstream teachers have either the interest or the skill in teaching children with special educational needs, and that it is important to recognise this and delegate accordingly. In order to dissolve the mystique of the specialist role, we have to break down the barriers between mainstream and specialist teachers, and to develop a co-operative system. I observed this in practice in the United States, where legislation had forced a sharing of expertise. The special needs teachers were an integral part of the mainstream staff, supported by school counsellors and social workers, who were serving the needs of all pupils. In this cohesive climate, it seemed to be much easier for mainstream staff who were interested in developing curricula for children with special needs to implement their ideas with the support of experts, until they became the expert. At one high school, where students with physical and sensory handicaps were integrated, the P.E. teacher had become an expert in recreational activities for these students and was developing most exciting and innovative work. Far from appearing a burden to have such students placed in his care, he was fired with enthusiasm and was gaining the status of a recognised expert. It is surely a more positive and productive approach to integration to readily share expertise, and thus include those who are interested in the pleasures and rewards of working with students with special needs, than to regards the sharing of responsibility as an onerous imposition.

Employing Labels

The perpetuation of a selective approach has major flaws in that it debilitates those left behind, avoids a critical

examination of curriculum relevance and enables certain categories to be selected and others rejected. This inequitable discrimination creates a hierarchy among minority groups so that, just as West Indian children outnumber other ethnic minority groups in their presence in special education, so children with behavioural problems are being increasingly rejected by mainstream education (Booth, 1982; Tomlinson, 1984; Swann, 1985). Before we look to the 1981 Education Act as an answer to such indefensible discrimination, we need to cautiously regard the effects of selection for the labelling process in the USA. If children are to be maintained in mainstream, rather than segregated in special schools, and if more children with special needs are to be brought into mainstream, adequate resources are critically important. However, this can present a Catch-22 situation, where resources will only materialise when a selective process of labelling is perpetuated. Where special schools have been closed, as in New York, selection for the labelling process persists, as the administrators admit,

> ..our Education Book for New York city is grey because the decisions are grey..there is little difference between the slow learner in a mainstream group and the learning disabled child, so why do we go through the emotional and fiscal harangue of labelling - because it produces money which creates resources.. (interview with N.Y. Director for Special Ed. Oct. '86).

Are we going to move from the selection of specific children for inclusion in mainstream education to the selection of certain children for labelling: the former disregarded the resource implications whilst the latter hinges upon them, but at a price. This administrator defines the process of selection for labelling as a grey area, just as an administrator responsible for special education in Harefield, when interviewed in September 1985, described the special needs in further education as a grey area in the borough. It is surely time to emerge from the

grey area into a clarity of purpose and ideology within LEA policy.

Token Integration

Successful integration schemes are not always what they seem. It is unfortunately not uncommon for an LEA to declare that it is integrating children with special educational needs when this is often no more than the token assimilation of a few children with physical and sensory handicaps. The major characteristics of tokenism are to be seen in isolated developments in the LEA, which fail to reflect a coherent policy, and in examples of the offer of physical evidence of integration without accompanying educational progression and participation (Sharron, 1986).

The following case illustrates the constrictions of the latter feature, depriving rather than benefitting the recipient. A 13 year old girl with Kearn's Saeyr Syndrome was integrated into Kenilworth Comprehensive School, with the help of a full-time helper. Despite being of average intellectual ability, she worked very slowly and had difficulty in keeping up with the rest of the class. Although she was gradually losing her sight and hearing, she was unable to learn braille or develop social independence within the comprehensive as there was no scope within the curriculum for providing these facilities. She was becoming more dependent and socially isolated, the difficulties of coping in a comprehensive intensifying her disability (Sharron, 1986). Without participation or progression, integration is not only a sham but is potentially damaging to the recipients. The observation of examples such as this results in many professionals declaring that integration is both impractical and unrealistic. It is ethically wrong to blame the pupil with special needs for the inability to adapt. It was for the school

to adopt a problem-solving attitude to this girl's need for independence and to devise a curriculum to suit her requirements. This necessitates a change in climate where achieving independence in the community can rate alongside numeracy and literacy as a priority area.

Isolated innovation can be observed within one educational institution, and consequently regarded as mere token integration. I observed what I considered to be token integration in Pierce School, Brookline, Massachusetts. In this elementary school, commended for its innovative approach (Vaughan & Shearer, 1985), a class of four severely disabled children were integrated. Two were autistic and two had complex physical handicaps. One teacher and four welfare assistants provided a sufficiently high staff ratio for up to 70% functional integration within mainstream classes. However, within the same school, were classes of children with learning disabilities spending up to 60% of their week in the confines of their Resource Room, with one teacher and one assistant to six pupils. It seemed to offer a conflict of ideology when integration was so unevenly represented within one establishment. Yet, the class for severely handicapped children attracted maximum publicity as it became a model of innovative practice in integrating the most dependent pupils with an intensive level of support. Focus upon one easily indentifiable group of disability as a model for research can be dangerous for long-term practice. Perhaps we should be careful to balance the rapid increase in integration for children with Down's Syndrome with comparable examples for children with moderate learning difficulties. Tokenism implies short-term attention seeking rather than long-term policy. The integration of students with physical disabilities into Fraser College, whilst students with learning difficulties were neglected and

segregated, offers a pertinent example of the limitations of this practice.

Sharing Responsibility

The first step towards sharing responsibility and status is to make special education an integral part of LEA provision, and no longer an additional section, isolated into a separate service of the DES (Booth, 1985; Marshall, 1986). Many examples of the placement model of integration have fostered what Biklen terms a dual system where specialists work separately, as a law unto themselves, and are not incorporated into the mainstream ethos. This can lead to misunderstandings:

> ..I wish there was more sharing. Sometimes our teachers are resentful that they (the special education teachers) not only get our holidays because the school is closed but others as well. The intermediate program closes one week before ours does in June. So they have the luxury of finishing their reports, doing IEPs, and cleaning their rooms while our teachers are still teaching all day. When the program first began, there was more sharing and openness. Now there is more, if not complete, domination by them. They share very little with us. We are really ignored as far as decision making is concerned. (School Principal) The relations of regular and intermediate school personnel had deteriorated to one of we and they.. (Biklen, 1985, p.60).

Sharing has to involve a cooperative trust and united ethos. My model of integration includes a sharing of good practice, and an opening-out of curriculum barriers. This can lead to surprising results, as Sharron testifies,

> ..Originally there was a view within the school that mainstream teachers knew nothing about the teaching of children with special needs and vice versa. But it soon became clear that there was a tremendous overlap in curriculum and skills.. (Sharron, 1985, p.21).

It is significant to note that these observations were made of a very successful model of integration in practice, Springfield Road Junior School, Derbyshire, and they reflect the usual caution which greets any suggestion of change.

A comprehensive school head in Dagenham fosters the sharing of responsibility for children with special educational needs as

> .All mainstream schools have some pupils who are worse than some in special schools. The implications will not be as traumatic as feared. Integration will require an examination, or re-examination of: attitudes and expectations, beliefs and prejudices, the curriculum, the pastoral and support structures, record keeping and communication, and the mechanics and language of teaching. There is a danger of creating academic and special mainstream schools, when some schools are engaged in integration to a far greater level than others..There needs to be an acceptance, at all levels, of the demands integration will make on organisation, time and energy.. (Hayton, speaking at a conference, 1986).

Hayton's recognition of the danger of creating special mainstream schools in important as it may act as a barrier to future innovation. Until LEAs join in the sharing of a policy of unconditional integration, head teachers such as Hayton will remain pioneers, and continue to work in isolation.

Supporting Change

Meanwhile, special schools are suffering a crisis of identity in which,

> ..The key point for improving the quality of special schools is confidence. When established systems are challenged and changed, the confidence of professionals must be maintained.. (Hancock, speaking in a conference, 1986).

In looking towards the new role of special education the influence of change must be considered. Many special school teachers feel unsure of their new roles (Bower, 1984; Barton & Tomlinson, 1984). Some special educators have reacted to integration by becoming obsessed with that to the exclusion of all else,

> ..This has created the lifeboat syndrome, where a special school head will say, "We have links with these two primaries; these two secondaries; send six pupils into mainstream; two science staff come in from the secondary.."
> The link is only a link when all teachers have an opportunity to work in both school settings, and all pupils have a chance to work in both settings..

I thoroughly endorse Hancock's sentiments, as the lifeboat syndrome is serving to alienate staff and pupils, and I consider it seriously debilitating to the special schools, which are still catering for those children who Hancock suggests that are rejected by the current system. The expectation now is that special schools should mirror mainstream by offering:

> ..curriculum specialists; an integrated curriculum to prevent the rigidity of individual programmes; better use of support staff; improved progression; physical access and social integration into the community; an end to all-age special schools; a minimum size to avoid ghettos; establishment of appropriate bases for provision, for example, at post-16 level. (Hancock, speaking at a conference, 1986).

I support a model of integration which restores confidence to special educational practice to extend into mainstream. However, this will require a new perspective, what Biklen (1985) refers to as 'a given' of the setting, in which special educational expertise will become a whole-staff responsibility, with special educators learning to share their skills and thus multiply their effectiveness.

Chapter 23

PROSPECTS FOR INTEGRATION IN FURTHER EDUCATION

In this chapter I examine recent initiatives and the impact of pre-vocational education, especially the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education, on integration in further education. I discuss recent developments in the Youth Training Scheme and compare provision for students with special needs at Southwark College with the provision available at Fraser College, both similarly-sited and serving similar local needs. Finally, I reflect upon possible future directions for students with special needs in further education.

Recent Progression

I have already indicated that the development of provision for students with special needs in further education had expanded dramatically through the 1980s. However, the majority of course provision was within the framework of separate courses designed for a group with clearly defined needs. As the inclusion of students with a wide range of needs became more evident within further education, and as the MSC and YTS influence strengthened its hold, the opportunity for integration within mainstream course provision increased.

Equal Opportunities Policies, related to the employment of people with disabilities, are increasingly including the essential element of long-term support and counselling which has enabled people with severe learning difficulties to obtain employment in the community (Porterfield and Gathercole, 1985). A detailed national survey has revealed the gaps in provision for students with special needs and serves as a spur to apathetic local education authorities (Stowell, 1987). The most refreshing and potentially innovative development, in relation to the earlier emphasis upon placement and teaching method, is the

attitude to staff development reflected in A 'Special' Professionalism (D.E.S., 1987).

In this recent publication is a timely acknowledgement of the need to accept difference, to see integration as mutual adaption (p.5), to offer flexible provision and involve the wide college and LEA community. It calls for,

> ..a reappraisal of attitudes to dispel the mystique surrounding the education of students with special needs as something that is essentially different from all other teaching and is undertaken by teachers who are themselves in some way different..(DES, 1987 p.6).

If the current reactionary policies and economic strictures will permit the implementation of these staff development initiatives, it bodes well for the increased level of participation to be enjoyed by students with special needs.

Pre-Vocational Training

When the CPVE (Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education) was introduced in 1984-5 as a curriculum development open to all abilities, including students with special needs, it appeared to be the answer to integration in further education. When Ron Brown, from the Regional Curriculum Base at Garnett College, London, SW15, visited Fraser College in the Autumn term of 1985, he assured us that students with moderate learning difficulties were to be included in CPVE. They would not be expected to complete all the Modules which other students might cope with, but could base their programme on the Core activities, supported by specialist staff. CPVE has considerable potential to develop integrated provision for students with special needs in further education as it designs curriculum content to suit the needs of the individual, includes the student in the process of reviewing and recording progress which offers a high level of participation, and is designed to emphasise skills and not to

label failures, as in a formal examination system. However, having committed myself to being an advocate of this provision, as it offers a level of equality formerly lacking for the 14-19 year old age group, I feel it is prudent to examine teething problems critically as a means of ensuring useful provision for the future. I have illustrated the complexities and problems which the process of integration entails, when even the most well-planned schemes can be faced with difficulties. Accepting that there will be problems, and facing up to them is preferable to ignoring them and hoping they will evaporate. Problems in themselves are no indication that a scheme is unworkable. They are just part of the complex process of change.

Sue Wilkinson, of Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, was involved in a pilot project which involved 3 colleges in different regions of Britain, including Weston-super-Mare Technical College and Cambridge College of Further Education, in establishing a CPVE Course for students with moderate learning difficulties, as she details below,

> ..Implementing the core with students with moderate learning difficulties, began by analysing the existing curriculum of the three colleges and noting obvious gaps or weak areas. These were found to be information technology, science and technology, social and environmental skills. Some staff development work was done on selected core items. The group fed back examples and discussed their relevance. A final core analysis was completed in July 1985. The consensus appeared to be that students with learning difficulties could benefit from a CPVE framework but might need more than one year to be eligible for certification.. (Wilkinson, 1986, p.516).

Wilkinson noted specific problems in integrating students with learning difficulties into CPVE. It took time for students who had experienced a sheltered segregated schooling to adjust to mixing with their peers from a mainstream background. The responsibility of learning to use public transport to get to college and back was enough for students from special school

backgrounds to cope with, during their first terms at college. It was, therefore, decided to make the target group for CPVE the second year group of the course.

She corroborated Major's (1986) findings that as students with learning difficulties have very little experience of theoretical planning it is difficult for them to decide what they hope to achieve through a task, as the concepts are too complex. The terminology used in a CPVE joint Board document translated the pre-CPVE college profile words talking, listening, writing, helping others and workshop activity to communication, social skills, and practical skills, which tutors then found themselves having to explain to the confused students, as Major (1986) testified. The process of negotiation, central to the profiling method, was complex and difficult for students with learning difficulties, as they were unable to negotiate on equal terms. The process of reviewing and recording, also central to profiling, was difficult for these students, as they had to record their own work, which they found very taxing, and they often had made minimal progress within the frequent reviewal periods in the CPVE framework, which was frustrating for them. Whilst other students approached the introductory modules from a theoretical basis, these students worked from a practical focus which only served to emphasise the distance between these students and their peers. Wilkinson suggests that the restrictions of the CPVE criteria inhibit the process of catering for individual needs, and is cautious in her appraisal:

> ..The currency of CPVE - to be like normal students and get a certificate - has an appeal for both staff and students. I would hope that the cost of that currency does not prove to be too high. (Wilkinson, 1986, p.520).

This caution serves as a reminder that token integration is mere

window-dressing and rarely works to the advantage of the recipients.

YTS Developments

In order to ensure that providers do not discriminate against young people with special needs, MSC has introduced changes to the two-year YTS administrative framework which will

> ..take the form of a contractual requirement: making a declared commitment to equal opportunities a criterion for acquiring approved training organisation status, and monitoring the participation rates of disabled trainees on individual schemes. Information from surveys of those leaving YTS will also be used to monitor the effectiveness of MSC's equal opportunities policy.. (Roger, 1986, p.562).

In addition to a policy of positive discrimination, MSC introduced on 1st April, 1986, four schemes to offer special help to disabled young people: special aids to employment, adaptations to premises and equipment, personal reader service for the blind and a communication service for the deaf. Whilst MSC favours integrated YTS for disabled trainees, it recognises that this is not practical for some young people and has introduced - Permanent Additional Funding for the Disabled (PAFD), which will be provided generally to workshops with specialist expertise (Rogers, 1986). In the new funding arrangements from April, 1986, a basic grant of £160 per month, and a Premium grant of £110 for trainees needing extra support, are included with the PAFD. Some careers officers expressed reservations that

> ..a number of training workshops, which will be looking to premium grants to ensure their survival, are also extremely selective in terms of the ability and motivation of potential trainees.. and that..
> although additional finances (are) being provided, it is still not sufficent to give these young people the back-up services which they require... (ICO/RADAR Survey 1986 p.20)

For the future, it appears that MSC have considered the needs of young people with disabilities and have discriminated in their

favour. Whether this discrimination can adequately compensate for their disadvantaged economic position within society is another matter.

Devising Appropriate Provision

I have already described several examples of good practice throughout Britain. To focus more clearly upon good practice, in relation to this study, I will describe provision at Southwark College which shares many features of Fraser College. It is a London College, in an inner-city community which is varied in terms of class, culture and ethnic background, has seen a dramatic change in prosperity and has a rate of unemployment among the highest in the country. The diversity of this local community is reflected in the student population. Whilst Fraser College shares all these characteristics, it failed to respond as Southwark did for

> ..Southwark, in line with ILEA policy, has tried to be a community college and people with learning difficulties and disabilities are part of that community.. (Aitchison, 1986 p.490)

I will firstly suggest the ways in which I consider the provision at Southwark to be conducive to the integration process, before comparing the position of Fraser College.

Curriculum access was provided when a Foundation Course for school-leavers with no qualifications was established in the late 1970's. This enabled some students with learning difficulties to be integrated. The principal wanted the college to formulate a policy which could be used as the basis for development. The report which was presented to the academic board outlined potential demand from students with special educational needs. When a special course for students with learning difficulties was planned, a tutor was appointed months ahead, so that the necessary curriculum and staff development could take place. The

course base room was placed in a central position in the main college, rather than the suggested annexe. It was recognised that special course provision was a step towards functional integration, and that the college had a responsibility to cater for all needs:

> ..some converts to the college's provision for students with special educational needs felt that this (providing special courses) would be a step backwards from integration but were persuaded that integration was the aim and progression the target, and that this course would provide a stepping stone - not a barrier.. (Aitchison, 1986, p.492)

When several blind students wanted to attend courses at the College the LEA transferred a teacher from a school for the blind, as numbers at the school were falling and it was a valuable use of specialist resources.

The College provided a base room on the ground floor of a new site which offered good access for people in wheelchairs so that a course called Widening Horizons could be established. I am particularly interested in this course, as it caters for much the same target as the Bridging Course at Fraser College. However, there are features of the Southwark Course which give it a clear advantage. One is that the base room was on the ground floor which might seem a trivial detail but it saves waiting for lifts and experiencing endless inconveniences. The students would use other areas of the college, but a ground floor base room means ease of access for welfare needs. Another factor was that the course was run in conjunction with the local adult education institute which is an invaluable advantage as the outreach expertise of the institute was able to recruit the students, from hostels, day centres and welfare worker's files, and the institute and college between them were then able to offer a challenging breadth of curriculum, so

> ..combining the general education and pre-vocational skills of the FE College with the broader life enhancing skills of the Adult Education Institute, providing a course which met the needs of a group of people, the majority of whom had spent most of their lives in institutions of one kind or another.. (Aitchison, 1986, p.494)

Within this course progression was seen as two-directional, either into mainstream courses or into an autonomous life style, in which the student would decide their own long-term goals. In acknowledging both community and institutional participation Widening Horizons fosters integration within its broadest social context.

Southwark College offers a model of how the integration of students with special needs can be facilitated within a whole-college policy. Whilst Fraser College shared the geographical, economic and social characteristics of Southwark College, there comparisons end. Both ILEA and Harefield favoured an Equal Opportunities policy to which Southwark College responded by becoming a community college, whilst Fraser College remained largely impervious to the local community. At Fraser College a response to Warnock meant assimilating a selected group of the disabled being by no means representative of local special needs. Students with learning difficulties were integrated into the college community at Southwark whilst they were segregated into off-site unit provision at Fraser college. Staff training and curriculum development were priorities at Southwark but they were ignored at Fraser College, as it was assumed that assimilation required no change to teaching methods or curriculum. From the early stages at Southwark, the need for special course provision, sharing of specialist expertise, and community participation was recognised as a stage to progression for many students with special needs. At Fraser College, there was progression on to existing course or nothing. No special

course provision was considered necessary or adequately funded, despite the assimilation failing to develop as planned and a need for staff training becoming evident. Adult education existed separately and there was no sharing of expertise and subject choices.

Possible Future Directions

We need to learn from those colleges which achieved success in integration, and become open to external influences. Integration in a college of further education has to involve the local community in which it is placed and whose needs it must serve. Unless local needs are met, there will be a continued pattern of special mainstream colleges absorbing disproportionate numbers of students with special needs. As Stowell (1983) cautioned, this creates another form of segregation.

A new vocational college which is opening in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in September, 1987, may offer a prospect for future integration but it appears to be perpetuating this very segregation. A special school, one of four which are to be closed, will form the base for a 14 to 19 college, the first of its kind in the country (Surkes, 1987). It will take children who would otherwise have attended the special schools but not those with severe physical disabilities or behavioural problems who will remain in special schools (ironically, those very categories I said earlier were invariably rejected). It will take pupils of low academic ability from secondary schools, as well as those in special schools, and offer full and part-time courses to 200 students, concentrating on basic skills such as gardening, farming and family care. A council spokesman said that

> .. the whole idea is to get away from the putting of one kind of disability into one place, to give the children

> a wider range of prospects, to get as many into mainstream education as possible.
> (Surkes, 1987, p.11)

It will be interesting to monitor the progress of this new initiative and to record whether it can lead to enhanced progression for currently neglected minorities, or will merely serve to perpetuate the low status of locational provision. Avoiding the putting of one kind of disability into one place by placing many special educational needs in one institution hardly constitutes integrated provision. It threatens to replicate the hierarchy of compulsory education and the inequality of YTS provision. The process of rejection and selective integration which this model entails can only foster disharmony, unless the LEA is receptive to research recommendations.

Chapter 24

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CASE STUDY

In this chapter I discuss my conclusions from the three-year study as participant-observer. These are examined in four main sequences. The false premise on which the integration scheme was based is evaluated in relation to the lack of policy, participation, provision, progression and power which resulted. The importance of accepting differences in integration is illustrated with examples of individual student progress. The contradictions and complexities inherent in integration are examined in relation to my liaison role and to those initiatives which purport to offer 'Equal Opportunities' and a 'Whole-College Policy'. Finally, the need to demythologise specialists and to see things differently is demonstrated.

A False Premise

The integration scheme, established at Fraser College in September 1981, was based upon a false premise. The logic ran thus:

> Disabled students can be assimilated,
> Students with learning difficulties cannot be assimilated,
> Therefore disabled students do not have learning difficulties.

This generalisation is patently not true of many students, particularly some of those with cerebral palsy and spina bifida and hydrocephalus (Anderson, 1982; Holgate, 1985). Such a blanket assumption ignored resource, curriculum and staff training implications of students with learning difficulties. This, in turn, led directly to the unsatisfactory pilot year, the inadequacies of the Bridging Course and the limited progression of students with disabilities. No policy was established when the scheme was initiated because no needs were recognised. This form of integration had been selected precisely because it was

seen, by senior administrators in Fraser College, to require no change in practice. In reality, without the motivation to change, the degree of flexibility needed to cater for a wide range of differences would be lacking, as, indeed, it proved to be.

From this false premise were derived the major barriers to integration in Fraser College: lack of policy, lack of participation, lack of progression, lack of provision and lack of power.

Lack of Policy

Tentative integration inhibits progression and weakens participation. I came into the scheme at Fraser College in January 1983 when it was uncertain if the experimental period was to be extended. I left in March 1986, knowing that the Bridging Course was to be abandoned from September 1986, and uncertain as to the future prospects for students with special needs. A degree of uncertainty dogged my period within the scheme, and had certainly marred the progress of my predecessor. This uncertainty indicated the lack of commitment in terms of clear policy statements, long-term resource planning and LEA strategy for integration. The problems with physical access meant that getting in was of paramount importance, although as subsequent events illustrated, the placement of students with special needs by itself does not constitute integration. A policy of equality of opportunities should have been established from the planning stages, to include the needs of local people and to offer all minorities groups access to further education, rather than present them with barriers. Staff training was essential in order to ensure adequate consultation and comprehension of the institutional commitment. Honesty as to the true needs of the group being integrated was required instead of the blanket label

disabled creating a confusion. Lack of resources continually hampered course development, and ensured a continuation of the pilot scheme experimental approach.

When I left the scheme, after three and a half years, I felt that it had been an educational experiment which was regarded as a failure by the borough. The process of integration cannot develop without LEA policy, and there was confusion rather than commitment displayed by Harefield Education Department in relation to the scheme at Fraser College. LEA reluctance to contribute resources to the Bridging Course suggested an acknowledgement of the inadequacies of the scheme and an unwillingness to proceed with an unsuccessful experiment. It is interesting to compare the way in which Harefield established provision for students with special needs at Spencer College. All of the features noted as being crucial for successful integration were provided. They included an Equal Opportunities Policy, to include students with special needs, comprehensive staff training programmes, recognition of the needs of students and curriculum planning to accommodate these needs, a participants role within college management for the senior lecturer for special needs, with an expanding team being appointed and resources provided to match long-term requirements. Harefield education officers learnt from the mistakes of the Fraser College scheme and were able to ensure that these errors were not repeated at Spencer College which presented a less complex task as change can be more easily implemented in new rather than traditional institutions. The nature of integration at each college differs markedly in its prognosis for whilst there is minimal room for expansion at Fraser College, expansion is endemic to Spencer College. The one offers accommodation only

in its existing course framework and the other creates course accommodation to suit demand.

Lack of Participation

A scheme which was established on a false premise could not be sustained. Whilst it was evident that students with disabilities had been accepted into Fraser College, their powerless status in the institution illustrated a failure to match tolerance with participation. Mark represented his course in the Students Union, yet was outweighed by majority opinion when the security measures were discussed. The student body of sympathetic to the position of disabled students, yet there was no attempt made to radically alter the building to suit the needs of the minority. There was little likelihood of the level of understanding which could lead to change, unless the inconveniences of the minority were experienced by all. Whilst there was progression available in theory, this was seen to break down in practice, as the experience of Molly Francis, and the majority of the students on the Bridging Course, illustrate. Molly wanted to participate more fully in the life of the institution, but this was denied her. She was not only unable to gain physical access to her tutor group room, but could not enter the staff dining room without undergoing an obstacle course. Her restricted level of participation could not offer her the equality of opportunity enjoyed by her colleagues.

Lack of Provision and Progression

Provision and progression are more important than placement. I have earlier indicated that many students came into the Bridging Course, once it had been established, as it represented the college response to students with special needs rather than because it was the ideal placement for them. Opportunity for participation in other courses was severely inhibited by course

entry requirements and the vocational emphasis within provision, while many areas were often inaccessible for wheelchairs. Hassan was desperate to resume study and begged to attend English and Maths classes on the Bridging course. I knew that this was not an appropriate course provision for him, and that inclusion in a group of special school leavers would segregate rather than integrate him into the British education system. Yet his desperation was such that I reluctantly accepted him. He worked extremely hard for five months, spending every lunch-hour in the library, and taking pains over his homework, before he dropped out in the Spring term. He was growing despondent and frustrated with his isolation and lack of participation within the corporate life of the college. I felt that Fraser College had failed Hassan in denying him the chance to participate in a provision which would have been valuable to many local students among Harefield's substantial immigrant population, living in the immediate vicinity of Fraser College. Had classes in English as a second language been offered as course provision this would have been an appropriate service, and such failure to respond to local need surely reflects a disparity in participation.

Lack of Power

A glance around most urban environments will indicate the low status of people with disabilities. Kerbs are high, libraries and town halls inaccessible to those in wheelchairs or, as in examples like the Tate Gallery, entry is only possible through the back door. I resent this back door-entrance policy, as, I am sure, do most people in wheelchairs. If the director of the gallery or library was in a wheelchair would she or he only wish to enter through the back corridors? Could this back-entrance philosophy be maintained if people in positions

those in wheelchairs? A back-entrance has connotations of inferior status and is surely negating equality of opportunities. At Fraser College, a huge barrier of stone steps greeted students in wheelchairs. Instead of using the main entrance, like everyone else, they were presented with a lengthy and uncomfortable detour to the shabby, back fire exit. I was always conscious of the poor impression this gave students. It made them feel that they were an inconvenience and a nuisance to caretakers who had to unlock doors for them. At Spencer College, there were only two steps at the main door and a ramp had been positioned next to the steps for people in wheelchairs so that there was one common entrance, leading directly into the welcoming common room-cum-dining area. Molly Francis and I had regularly complained to LEA officers about the lack of front access at Fraser College, but were told that funding and practical problems prohibited action.

It might appear trivial to find first impressions and front door access to be of such importance, but it would not be trivial if all members of the college community were so treated. Finkelstein (1981) was revealing society's hypocrisy in illustrating that majority cultures expose minority groups to degrading discomfort and inconvenience, purely because they are minorities, and therefore assume a sub-status. The 'back-entrance' philosophy characterises the placement model of integration and the way in which Fraser College perceived special needs.

Accepting Differences

Integration, if it is to involve genuine progression and participation, has to mean accepting differences. Further education should be an area in which the acceptance of diversity

and provision of accessible curriculum is a fundamental key to its philosophy. However, too many courses are inflexible and geared to school-leavers. Many mature students are now seeking further education provision, among them those with disabilities of various kinds.

As I emphasised, in the introductory section in which I defined my terminology, the term disability covers a very wide range of people with diverse needs and different problems. In describing how students I observed at Fraser College were able to adapt to college life or dropped out because of various difficulties, I am illustrating the need to accept differences and to allow for flexibility.

The Reality of Coping

I fervently agree with Hurst (1984) that cultural perceptions can place people with disabilities in a sub-human category which both relegates them to a pitiful dependency and regards their least achievement as an amazing triumph against cruel fate. They are placed in a permanent state of childhood, where they must remain cushioned from harsh reality. I considered it most important that students with disabilities who attended Fraser College were allowed the chance to fail. However, from my experience in this scheme, I now recognise that the formidable obstacles which were presented resulted in only the most resiliant students surviving the course.

I learnt that people with severe physical disabilities need extraordinary motivation and strength of character to sustain them through a college course in mainstream further education. This is partly a reflection on the barriers which are presented within the system: inadequate resources, limited curriculum access, unequal participation and restricted progression. It is

also an indication of the various reasons for drop-out: ill-health, tiredness, depression and loss of confidence.

Reasons for Drop-Out

Referring back to Table 18, which records the attendance of part-time students on the Bridging Course of 1984 to 1985, I will assess the reasons for a 34% drop-out. Three students dropped-out of Computer Studies because Jim Shaw was no longer teaching on the course, and a series of supply lecturers had eroded their confidence and interest in the subject. Two students dropped out in order to join a YTS course mid-term. Mary dropped out in order to give more time to her commitments at Milton Road Centre. Hassan dropped out as course provision was inappropriate. Other students dropped out for more complex reasons.

June had cerebral palsy and additional learning and emotional problems. She was twenty years old, but was still very dependent upon adult support, being anxious and lacking confidence. Her physical difficulties were complex, and included requiring two sticks to walk, powerful glasses in order to see, as she was very short-sighted, and assistance in toileting, as she often had accidents. June attended needlecraft classes at Fraser College, coming in once a week from Grasswick College. She often forgot her glasses and was unable to do any work without them. She sometimes arrived soaking wet and Mary and Kathy had to find some suitable clothing for her from the welfare room. After several weeks, during which we had experienced a few crying sessions from June, she confided to staff at Grasswick College that she was frightened of attending Fraser College. June's anxiety in being able to cope with the different demands of the mainstream college had made her actually regress, rather than gain new independence, and she had resumed the pattern of crying and sucking her thumb which she had grown out of at

Grasswick College. This was evidently an example of the integration process being positively detrimental, due to a combination of institutional rigidity of the part of Fraser College and emotional instability on the part of the student.

Table 20

FULL TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1985-1986

Student	disability	background	qualifications	progress
Kay	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Hillcroft School	2 CSEs grade 3,4.	attends erratic-ally
Pat	spina bifida & hydrocephalus	Hillcroft School	2 CSEs grade 3,4.	steady & slow
Kim	hemiplegic cerebral palsy	Hillcroft School	none	very pleasing
Sam	arthritis	School for the Delicate	none	not fulfilled potential through poor attendance
Richard	sickle-cell anaemia	comprehen-sive school	none	very pleasing

Josephine, a woman in her mid-twenties, who attended Highfield Hall, wanted to expand her social horizons through college attendance. She had attended a special school for children with physical disabilities as she had a weak heart and grand mal epilepsy, but she totally rejected a disabled identity. However, despite her clear desire to socialise and to mix in an able bodied community, she was very dependent upon the secure community of Highfield Hall and had been cushioned from outside influences by over-protective parents. She initially asked to join a PE group, where vigorous movement to pop music was performed by a selection of students from various course options. Although Josephine said she really enjoyed this activity, she clearly exhausted herself after the first session, and care for

her heart condition had to preclude further vigorous activities. She joined art classes on the Bridging Course for a couple of sessions but dropped out as she disliked being in a group with students who were physically disabled. Josephine wanted to get away from physical disability, yet she needed appropriate part-time provision which adult education would have offered. The fact that she declined to seek attendance in an adult education class, despite our advice that she should, indicated an underlying emotional insecurity which prevented Josephine from taking the step towards enhanced independence which she both sought and feared.

Both Cheryl, in 1984-5, and Nichola, in 1985-6, had polio and dropped out because they found walking around the buildings of Fraser College so exhausting. This sheer physical ordeal can be overlooked by the able-bodied, but, if it takes twenty minutes to walk from the college gate to the classroom in order to attend a two-hour class once a week, then the student has to be highly motivated to make the effort worthwhile. Tables 20 and 21 indicate that erratic attendance was common on the Bridging Course. Many students suffered prolonged periods of ill-health, which kept them at home. Some students, in particular those who had multiple sclerosis, where their condition was deteriorating, experienced periods of depression during which they stayed at home. Several students, including those on the full-time course, like Kay, who had spina bifida and hydrocephalus, were very irregular attenders. Kay grew tired very quickly and had many kidney infections which confined her to bed. Sam's arthritis would regularly flare up, causing him great pain and requiring long periods of complete rest.

Table 21

PART TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1985-1986

Student			Course		Progress
Name	d.o.b.	disability	subjects	attendance	drop-out*
Fanny	14.7.37	epilepsy	cookery	4/30	too tiring*
Sharon	11.1.67	cerebral palsy	music drama	11/15	successful
Tony	16.9.49	blind	music drama	15/15	very successful
(progressed to another music class for advanced work).					
Jillian	7.1.65	spina bifida	maths music drama	13/15	successful
Kate	22.4.56	cerebral palsy	English	5/15	bored (3rd year of attendance).*
Leslie	22.4.32	stroke	English	22/45	erratic attendance
(transport problems preventing regular attendance).					
Meg	1.6.67	cerebral palsy	music drama	11/15	successful
Philip	17.2.31	stroke	art computers	12/15	successful - progressing to O level Art
Sally	1.9.41	cerebral palsy	drama	10/15	successful
Arnold	9.8.44	cerebral palsy	cookery drama	34/38	very successful
Ruth	31.3.67	spina bifida	music drama	11/15	successful
Marion	21.1.31	stroke	computers cookery English	38/45	very successful
Sid	13.9.22	stroke	computers	9/15	successful
Den	25.2.24	stroke	computers	13/15	successful
Bob	13.1.19	stroke	computers	12/15	successful
Janet	21.5.46	cerebral palsy	cookery	27/30	very successful
Ralph	6.6.63	cerebral palsy	computers	12/15	successful
Joe	10.11.50	cerebral palsy	music drama	15/15	very successful
Student			Course		Progress

Table 21 continued..

PART TIME STUDENTS ON THE BRIDGING COURSE 1985-1986

Student			Course		Progress
Rachel	3.8.61	blind	maths	8/15	slow because of erratic attendance due to transport problems.
Tim	17.7.60	stroke	maths	7/15	attendance irregular
Nichola	16.8.44	polio	English	6/15	too tiring, too much walking in the building.*

(record of attendance from 23.9.85 to 24.1.86).

Of 21 students, 3 dropped out. This compares favourably with the average drop out rate on most mainstream courses, which can be as high as 25%.

How do I define successful or very successful?

Successful: a student who has maintained interest and enthusiasm for the subject, and can be seen to be contributing to the group.
Very successful: a student who has made an outstanding effort to contribute positively to the group, and who can be seen, through measuring performance fro the baseline onwards, to be improving, and extending skills and general self esteem.

Exceptional Students

Students like Kate and Tom, who had persevered against all odds, were the exception rather than the rule. They had both known what they wanted from college attendance and had worked very hard to achieve this. Regardless of their disabilities, which in both cases might have been considered exceptionally severe, Kate and Tom were outstanding personalities, who made a significant impact on all who came into contact with them. They both had tremendous strength of character, a sense of self-irony and infectious sense of humour. These qualities also sustained Mark through his period in a pre-vocational course which he attended after the Bridging Course. Despite his severe problems in written work, Mark's social skills saw him through into eventual employment.

I learnt to evaluate success less in terms of academic

achievement and more in relation to personal fulfilment. Thus, Pat, who progressed steadily through two years on the course without much academic success, was one of the most successful students within the whole development in terms of her personal growth. Hillcroft School had regarded Pat as a passive loner and it was not until she came to Fraser College that the independent streak in her was recognised. Pat did what she thought was right, and not what her peers suggested. She loved the atmosphere of the college and enjoyed its anonymity after the claustrophobia of special education. We observed her develop more confidence and practical skills. Although she is now in the same sheltered workshop as Stephen, and engaged in dull, repetitive work, Pat is throwing herself into that routine as actively as she did at Fraser College. Pat enjoys being busy in an interactive setting, and, for all its limitations, Fraser College was able to provide her with that opportunity to grow up.

Responding to Mature Students

Mature students were to form an increasingly high proportion of our student numbers (Table 22).

Table 22

Mature Students on Bridging Course

	16-19 year olds	Mature students
1983-1984	10	6
1984-1985	12	20
1985-1986	8	18

Many of the mature students, like Kate, Tom, Arnold and Janet, should have been in integrated classes had they been available. Had Fraser College displayed the flexibility of adult education by offering courses like Cookery for Beginners, Art for Pleasure, English Literature, Modern Poetry and other areas

of recreational and educational interest, such integration might have evolved, to the considerable social and educational benefit of the participants. A link with adult education would have opened access, as the example of Southwark College illustrates combining its further education and adult education provision, to offer a more flexible, diverse range for all students. (Faulks, 1986). This would be an ideal model to emulate, if the needs of mature students are to be adequately met.

The changing composition of the student population was not confined to students with physical handicaps. In the Unit, staff observed a marked change as

> There are now many more adults because youth provision has much improved. Young people tend to want specific vocational or pre-vocation training, and not the general education we can offer. Often students tend to be adults who have discovered, after a period away from formal education, that they want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.. (member of unit staff, February 1986).

In March 1986, I attended a REPLAN conference on the need for educational provision for the unemployed, with the senior lecturer in charge of the Unit. It was apparent, from discussion at the Conference, that there was a national need for co-ordination among agencies and institutions dealing with educational and training opportunities for the unemployed. These issues had direct relevance to students at the Unit and to students with special needs attending the Bridging Course. The senior lecturer from the Unit, in a recently published report, had already proposed that a network be established in Harefield,

> ..of agencies and organisations concerned with educational work, statutory and voluntary, with the unemployed in the locality.. (unit report, February 1986).

As a first step in co-ordination, she suggested establishing closer links between Spencer College and Fraser College. Unit staff intended to develop a modular foundation course, with

flexible learning packages suited to individual needs. They sought facilities of the main college, such as computer and office practice rooms, and they emphasised the value of a multi-skills workshop, such as that offered at Spencer College. In the report a future commitment to integrating students with physical disabilities, including those with learning difficulties, was proposed (unit report, Feb. 1986).

Change in Attitudes

It is interesting to note the change in attitude from that expressed by Maggie Major in 1983. This was a new head of the Community Unit, who had not experienced the frustrations of the pilot scheme. There was also a recognition that experience and expertise existed in the Unit to support students with special educational needs, including those with physical handicaps. Not only was there a need for provision for mature students but there was also a demand for part-time provision. The principal of Spencer College in November 1985, recorded 81% of the 1985 student enrolment as being that of part-time students. Response to mature students would require flexibility and an approach which placed the consumers in the position of declaring their needs to which the institution must respond. This would require a fundamental change in attitude at management level in Fraser College, for the ethos could not be said to be consumer-orientated at present.

Attitudes were, however, changing within the college community. In comparison to the hostilities and tension which I found when I arrived in January 1983, the atmosphere between 1984 and 1986 could be regarded as friendly and tolerant. A notable indication of improved relations was the remarkable absence of fire alarms. In the Autumn term of 1982, when there were only

four students in wheelchairs on the college premises, fire alarms were being set off with uncomfortable regularity. However, during the 1984 to 1985 academic year, when there were sixteen students in wheelchairs on the premises, fire alarms were rarely heard. This development implies a tolerant acceptance of disabled students by all concerned, specifically NATFHE, who had been so eager to highlight inadequacies in 1982. I would have welcomed more frequent fire drills for safety precautions, yet realised that this new casual attitude denoted a familiarity which ceased to focus on differences.

By 1985 there was generally an improved ease with disabled students throughout Fraser College. I perceived this as being a growing confidence among staff who had accepted students as being individuals rather than the disabled and a more relaxed manner shown by able-bodied students, who were helpful to disabled students without displaying embarrassment or awkwardness. When I had first taken students with athetoid cerebral palsy to eat in the college canteen, there had been awkward stares and embarrassed silences I could appreciate that the able-bodied students were often not used to mixing socially with people with disabilities and felt initial strangeness.

Gradually, over a period of two years, as more students with mobility problems and speech impediments integrated in the canteen, library, at discos and in classes, there was less embarrassment and more casual conversation and relaxed companionship. Students like Mark and Tom were valuable ambassadors, being gregarious and interested in participating in social life. However, I was aware that they were not characteristic of all the students with special needs and that many, especially those like Susan who had additional learning difficulties, found problems in integrating socially. This

improved atmosphere and increased tolerance could only develop over a sustained period of time, for it needed time to understand the needs of individuals rather than to maintain stereotypes, time to modify curriculum, and time to assimilate a formerly segregated minority.

Contradictions and Complexities

The case study method, with its probing and investigating, revealed contradictions and complexities which render neat conclusions obsolete but represent the reality of integration in practice.

It is because integration schemes generally rest on a guest-host relationship, rather than being part of a civil rights policy, that they require charismatic protagonists to sustain them. This is an unreliable and unsatisfactory situation. Yet it is a reality, borne out by many examples (Hutchinson, D, 1982; Billis, J. 1982; Lloyd, C. 1985; O'Hagan, G. 1985; Hayton, P. 1987).

A policy of Equal Opportunities has to involve positive discrimination to counteract the experience of oppression. This positive discrimination will entail both curriculum adaptation to facilitate educational participation and an appropriate level of support to ensure participation in community living. Ensuring that additional support is provided might appear to contradict the concept of integration. I would argue that it only contradicts this concept if integration is seen purely as assimilation. Assimilation does not offer equality of opportunities to many minorities. If, as I maintain, integration is about accepting differences, then appropriate support is in accordance with level of need. Some people will require considerable support in order to experience equality of

opportunities.

A whole-college policy is critical to successful integration. Yet, where it becomes constricting and inflexible, it can prevent the development of initiative. Some individuals may feel oppressed within a whole-college approach. Yet, in order for change to be initiated, policies have to be reinforced. The danger can lie in even the minority groups, for whom change is being developed, rejecting an institutional stance which they perceive as an artificial structure, subject to stress. Enforced policies, however enlightened, can foster tension and create sub-groups.

To illustrate these contradictions and complexities, I will discuss: the influence of my personality upon my role as liaison lecturer; an example of the promotion of equal opportunies; and an examination of the difficulties within a whole-college policy.

My Liaison Role

My role as liaison lecturer was complex, diverse and lonely, in that I was placed in a department, but never became part of it. This was partly because the role had been defined as being ex-department, and involving negotiation and counselling, but without managerial status. Had I been given a substantial teaching responsibility beyond that on the Bridging Course, I would have become a more integrated member of the college community and not exclusively labelled special needs. The diversity of my job was not only a reflection of the difficulties of such a post at Fraser College, however, but an example of the role of a special needs support tutor in any college. This typical week from my diary offers an illustration of the scope which liaison involves:

MONDAY

10-11. Assist in computer class. It is the first day for a deaf student with quadreplegic cerebral palsy, who uses the British Sign Language and Lip Reading.

11-11.30 Break time. Make tea and coffee for 10 students, including one deaf and one blind student.

11.30-11.40 Individual counselling with a student with spina bifida and hydrocephalus from Waterloo House, who is going through an emotional crisis.

11.40-12.30 Work in class with Maths teacher as a one-to-one aid for blind student. Welfare assistants work with students who need additional support.

12.30-1.30 Lunch in the canteen with the students. Two have only just started to use the canteen. The welfare assistants help to feed one student.

2.0-3.0 Write a report for the Board of Governors.

3.0-4.0 Teach English to Bridging Course Students.

Supervise transport: 3 different school buses; 1 taxi; 2 Harefield Dial-a-Rides.

TUESDAY

9.15-10.30 Discussion with welfare assistants to ensure they know of current liaison developments.

10.15 Phone call from Officer-in-Charge of Waterloo House, to arrange a meeting to discuss the progress of students.

10.30-11.15 Show parents around the college, as their daughter is coming onto the Bridging course in September 1985.

11.15-11.55 Write letters to Liaison agencies.

12.0-1.0 Join students in the canteen. Help get lunch for the students, one using a Cannon Communicator. Joined by A level girl student who has become a friend. Called out on the bleep to

help a student in a wheelchair waiting for a taxi.

2.0-3.0 Visit Milton Road Centre to take two mature students to visit the Women's education centre, to find out about classes.

4.0-4.10 Talk to School Bus driver about parking to the side to avoid blocking the path for incoming vehicles to the college. Discuss course provision with prospective student on the Bus, in his last year at the PH Special School.

WEDNESDAY

9.0-10.0 Teach English to students on the Bridging Course.

10.0-11.0 Consult caretakers about the adapted toilets for Molly Francis. Request coat hooks to be lowered so that students in wheelchairs can use them, in their cloakroom area.

11.0-12.0 Send letter to specialist careers officer to ask about a grant for a disabled boy over 18. Arrange news items on notice board eg. Glad, (the journal of the Greater London Association for Disabled People) ,news of local clubs, a newspaper cutting about a past student, leaflets about courses and YTS options.

12.0-1.0 Meeting with City & Guilds 365 Voc. Prep. course staff to discuss progress of handicapped students on the course.

1.0-3.0 Work in cookery class with the teacher. Assist students to cook and clear up. Design curriculum plans with cookery teacher.

3.0-4.0 Tutorial with students on Bridging Course.

4.0-6.0 On duty for Michael and Peter on engineering course, who have to be seen off the premises as they are dependent upon special transport and need support in the event of a fire.

THURSDAY

9.0-10.0 Photocopy leaflets to advertise the bridging course.

10.0-11.0 Library class. Work in the college library with students on Bridging Course. Librarian helps them to select books.

11.0-12.0 English class. Introduce guest speaker to Bridging Course students. Frank is disabled and has written an autobiography which the class is reading. He runs a youth club attended by some of the students in the group. They ask him question.

1.0-3.0 To visit Waterloo House to see Officer-in-Charge to discuss forthcoming meeting at Fraser College to decide the next moves for students leaving Bridging Course. Take the cookery teacher to see the kitchen facilities. One of the part-time students, Jenny, makes lunch and shows us her daily routine and domestic responsibilities.

8.0-11.0 Attend a party at Milton Road Day Centre, at the invitation of several mature students. Meet Kate's parents and brother there. Mary relates her progress in running the catering needs of the centre, since leaving cookery classes.

FRIDAY

9.0-10.0 Visit Hillcroft School to discuss the progress of their school-leavers on the Bridging Course, and to borrow software to use in computer classes.

10.30 Specialist careers officer arrives to interview full-time students and discuss their future plans.

11.30-12.0 Go with the PE lecturer to ask the head of department for more equipment and resources for PE sessions on the Bridging Course as many of the current resources are inappropriate.

12.0-1.0 Lunch with the Specialist Careers Officer in canteen.

1.0-1.20 See the drama lecturer to discuss her anxiety about the slow progress of students in the Bridging Course, and reassure her that it is to be expected and that there is a very positive feedback from students.

1.30-2.10 Attend a meeting in the Business Studies Department

with the Head of Department, Head of Borough Planning Department, and Molly Francis to discuss the access and aids which she has asked to have completed.

2.30-4.30 To visit Spencer College to attend a meeting with the senior lecturer for special needs.

As this 'typical week' implies, my freedom to devise a liaison programme, as I sought fit, was considerable. Any Special Needs Liaison Lecturer would have a complex timetable in which they would be selecting their most immediate priorities. Reading through my typical week, I can appreciate the influence which my personality and my priorities had on developments.

For example, I liked to make tea and coffee for the students and to share the gossip of break-times with them. I also organised parties at Christmas and end-of-term to which students invited their friends. I often ate lunch in the canteen with the students. Most staff did not (Fraser College preserved seperate staff and student canteens). I shared the wait outside for the collecting transport with my welfare assistants. I liked to work with the cookery lecturer and share practical chores with the students. I regularly attended evening parties at Milton Road Centre and enjoyed meeting the students informally and being introduced to their families and friends.

This pattern evolved because it was the way I liked to work and because the liaison role gave me the freedom to assess my priorities. Whilst I found that working closely and informally with students and staff suited me, it was no blue-print for the job. Others in the post might approach it completely differently and quite appropriately, on their own terms.

Yet, such was the association of my personality with my liasion role, that members of the college community appeared to define me within the role I played. Several expressed surprise

that I was teaching teachers on a City and Guilds course, as if I was primarily a welfare support for disabled students and not a teacher at all.

Token Equal Opportunities

A policy of Equal Opportunities cannot be said to be operating if applied in 'one-off' gestures. The practice of promoting equality of opportunity involves active, daily participation. It is, for example, ensuring that women and members of ethnic minority groups are well represented in positions of authority, particularly in an area like Harefield. More commonly, the substantial proportion of Afro-Caribbeans and Asians in the local community are barely visible in positions of power. As Gifford (1986) reported, unless students see powerful role-models from their own culture, they will continue to regard authority as an alien force.

In the administration week of July 1985, Fraser College mounted two racial awareness days, either of which could be attended by college staff. The idea was to promote racial understanding and to offer staff an opportunity to speak to leading members of local ethnic minority groups. It would have seemed appropriate to ask for guidance and advice from staff in the Community Unit, who were the most experienced in this field, with the additional asset of having a member who had recently published a book on multi-racial studies. However, management devised the programme without consultation, arranging for speakers from Harefield administrative office to open the day, with leaders of ethnic minority groups following on within a formal, pre-designed pattern of lectures from the platform. This was not what unit staff wanted, and they were conspicuous by their absence. It was not what several leaders of the Ethnic

Minority groups wanted, and they declined to speak at the last minute, leaving the college management with an embarrassing gap and an excuse for recrimination.

The opening speakers, all in senior positions in the Borough of Harefield, uniformally presented as white, articulate and middle-class men and women. This offered a formidable barrier to those speakers representing ethnic minorities who were to follow them. This is not to imply that these speakers would be any less articulate, but that the method of presentation they might have preferred, perhaps one of seminar group discussion and role play, was denied them within this formal structure.

Far from enhancing racial awareness among the majority of staff at Fraser College, only about 30% of whom attended, this exercise served only to further alienate many staff from the college management. It reflected the minimal level of participation allowed within the institution and from within the local community for, had racial awareness been a real issue at Fraser College, it should have been a policy designed by ethnic minority community leaders in collaboration with unit staff. This would have implied a genuine assumption of political power within the structure of the institution.

However, the power of participation is exactly what is lacking in the integration of minority groups in Fraser College. Assimilation of students from ethnic minorities, or with special educational needs, entails a total disregard for participation. It retains the status quo so that incoming minorities remain recipients rather than participants. They can accept what Fraser College has to offer but it will not create what they require.

Whole-College Policy

It is valuable to use Spencer College as an example of a community college which has positively adopted a whole-college

policy. The policy of the college towards racism, sexism and disability is made clear to all incoming staff and students. A system of staff training ensures that all staff are made aware of the relevant issues. The college is seen to belong to its community and to be consumer-orientated.

When I attended a conference there in November 1985, I discovered that Spencer College had responded to the needs of people in the immediate vicinity of Fraser College, for they were travelling across Harefield to attend classes there. The principal of Spencer College was proud to acknowledge the positive response which the college had taken towards catering for minority groups. Table 19 indicates the composition of the student group at Spencer College, according to numbers recorded by the principal. The high proportion of students with special needs is a reflection of the Equal Opportunities Policy, but it is also a source of negative labelling within the locality where, as Hayton (1986) acknowledged, a stigma is attached to mainstream institutions which responded so effectively to this neglected area.

Table 19

Composition of Student Groups at Spencer College: 1985

Ethnic minorities	69.9%
Black	48.1%
Female	54.7%
Special Needs	19.0%

This overt commitment created problems in the image and status which Spencer College acquired both within Harefield and beyond. It had been established within Harefield to fulfill this community role, yet this entailed an almost total emphasis upon

low-level Burnham status Grade V1 and V work. This pre-vocational, O level and Preliminary Course provision was designed specifically to suit the evident demands of prospective students. However, it served to label the college as special. Rumour was that some students sought out-of-borough provision rather than go to what they regarded as a special needs college. Spencer College was not deliberately rejecting high-level Burnham Grade 1 and 11 work but was trapped into the commitment to compensate for those areas neglected by Fraser College. This had created an unequal distribution of course provision as a result. Whilst Fraser College preserved its traditional work, a significant proportion of which was above Grade 1V, Spencer College was denied the opportunitiy of developing a more balanced course provision, as duplication within one LEA would have been unviable. Another dilemma was created by the high staff/student ratio required to serve students with special educational needs. This led to a low concentration of student numbers engaged in low-grade work directed by staff with senior status. Despite the clear educational justification for such an approach, there was criticism from some staff at Fraser College, who compared this situation unfavourably with their higher levels of course provision and greater concentration of student numbers.

In the Borough of Harefield, the two contrasting colleges of further education were creating an unfortunate polarization. Whilst some voiced the above criticism, and regarded Spencer College as the secondary modern to Fraser College's grammar school, others enthusiastically welcomed the new college. Those who had experienced unequal status in unit provision regarded Fraser College as deeply conservative and complacent in comparison to the innovative Spencer College. Here, at last, was a college in Harefield which had a welcoming approach to all

prospective students, not just those with academic qualifications.

Yet, it would be simplistic to suppose that this whole-college approach was the answer to all ills. Although I appreciated that Spencer College could respond to students with special needs far more effectively than Fraser College, which was inhibited by its traditional ethos, hierarchial structure and high status profile, I would not have wished to change places and work there. My acquaintance with staff from Spencer College was superficial but, after several visits, I had met those who were affected by tension, anxiety and the pressure to perform to expectations to the extent that they sought other posts or had nervous breakdowns. Others became totally absorbed in their work and lived, ate and slept Spencer College. I would find the demands of living within such an intensely committed community too stressful. I need the space to be an individual.

Spencer College, in trying to compensate for the complacency of Fraser College, distorted its role. One further education college, in a deprived borough such as Harefield, cannot accept responsibility for combatting all the social and economic problems of post-school residents while another further education college, less than three miles away, is allowed to go its own way. The distorted emphasis within Spencer College, with priority given to pre-vocational and non-examination work, led to some Afro-Caribbean students leaving to go elsewhere, lest they became stigmatised with the 'special needs' label.

The tyranny of a 'whole' school or college approach is that it relies upon a high level of sustained commitment to ideals which are artificially imposed within one specific institution. Such whole policies rarely reflect local education authority

practice generally and, therefore, penalise the enlightened heads and principals who foster them. Hayton (1987) testified to his success in coping effectively with difficult children, through his whole-school policy, being rewarded with the stigma of managing a special comprehensive which lost him potential pupils and has led to falling numbers. The need to create equality of opportunities through educational reform is evident. Yet if schools and colleges are to foster change, they cannot be left in isolation but need to be part of a borough policy within a national framework.

Demythologising the Specialists

As Stowell (1983) noted, the usual excuse for selecting one specific college of further education as the special needs provision for the locality is that it is impractical to distribute specialist resources in several locations so these are focused in one institution. This will only perpetuate the pressures placed on colleges like Spencer College and allow other colleges to ignore their responsibilities. During my three years at Fraser College, I was able to observe the work of so-called specialists. There are undoubtedly specific areas of expertise, like working with students with hearing impairment, which require expert guidance. Yet, there are many other areas in which students with different needs can be incorporated into college life with the support of sympathetic, well-informed mainstream staff. I will describe three examples of specialist support which denigrated specialist skill and indicated that the concerned outsider could provide more actual help.

Mark, a student whose progress on the Bridging Course has been described, displayed specific learning difficulties while being obviously quick-witted and articulate. One of the lecturers who taught Mark on the course requested further

information as to his specific problems. Hillcroft School staff, who had taught Mark, could offer no explanation for his difficulties and suggested that we ask for an educational psychologist's assessment. Whilst waiting for the assessment to take place, I asked to examine Mark's educational records from Hillcroft. There, I found a detailed Aston Index Test given by an educational psychologist when Mark was ten. This suggested clear reasons for Mark's difficulties and offered suggestions for improving his performance. Many teachers neglect to examine educational files when children come into their class. It needed no specialist to look up the record and read the enclosed report. If a mainstream lecturer had not expressed concern, and wanted to follow up Mark's progress in his own learning process, this valuable test report may have remained undetected.

A staff member of a local pressure group for handicapped people visited the students on the Bridging Course, and expressed surprise that so few had gained O level passes. He cited the case of a girl he knew who had multiple sclerosis, and had gained O and A levels and a subsequent university place. He could not understand why students with cerebral palsy and spina bifida could not do the same. He appeared not to appreciate the difference between congenital and acquired disability, nor understand the educational implications of specific types of handicap. As a specialist employment adviser, I considered that his ignorance of the complex disabilities of many of his clients would be a severe impediment to realistic goal-setting. Specialism in this instance might have applied to the employment information available, but not to the understanding of client needs and complexities.

Hassan, the paraplegic student who had been in a road

accident in his late teens, was dependent upon the service of friends to bring him in and out college. As this proved to be an unreliable practice, he sought a Dial-a-Ride service from within his borough, which was adjacent to Harefield. I contacted Hassan's specialist social worker, on his behalf, to arrange such a service, having been informed that it was available. She expressed no knowledge of any local Dial-a-Ride service for people of the borough with mobility problems. This service had been readily available from Hassan's first week at Fraser College, and fore-knowledge of it would have avoided much inconvenience, including one evening when we both waited from 4.30 until 7.30, outside the college, until I wheeled him around the block to find a friend who might be in. His friends, who were to collect him, had been delayed in traffic on the other side of London. Depending on travelling arrangements assumes great significance to students in wheelchairs, so that it appeared extraordinary that a specialist in this area of social work would not be well-informed in transport facilities. Where provision is available it must be seen to be used or it could become part of borough cuts, for minority services are rarely protected as permanent resources.

Seeing Things Differently

From recording these three instances of specialist ineptitude, I became convinced that there was much expert's support which was little more than a segregating device, excluding those people who had daily contact with the students. However, eroding the specialist mystique requires a total change in thinking. Similarly, in order to instigate change to benefit minorities within an institution like Fraser College, the whole pattern of college life would require re-shaping. Edward de Bono describes the complexity of changing concepts,

> ..the existence of a current concept or institution may actually block the emergence of a better concept..When elements and resources are tied up in one way they are not free to be reassured in a different way..It is not just that the inadequacy of a concept or the complacency with which it is held removes any design motivation - there is also the difficulty of escaping from the current pattern to see things differently..
> (de Bono, 1985, p.118).

This explanation serves to illustrate why a process like integration, which requires change, is so difficult to implement in an institution which maintains an impregnable concept of its purpose and its reality.

To return to the false premise with which I began this chapter: this premise permitted assimilation into an existing pattern to equate with the concept of integration which was accepted. A genuine integration, in which all students were given equal value and courses were structured around student need, would have required seeing things differently - exchanging one concept for another.

Chapter 25

RECOMMENDATIONS

In my final chapter, I make general recommendations from the experiences of the case study, drawing upon both the specific example of Harefield and upon integration schemes in general. I clarify the need for positive discrimination, the dispelling of stereotypes and, above all, a national and borough policy which fosters integration and equal opportunities. I conclude with the argument that genuine sharing of ideology, central to integration, has to include recognition of differences and support for problems, together with a new perception of what constitutes normality.

If integration is to be a viable, long-term objective we need to move beyond the labels. Special needs must be evaluated in terms of how the institutions will cope with the problem. It is for the educational establishment to adapt to suit its varied clientele, not for the consumers to adapt to fit into it. Integration involves community participation. It is for the community to demand appropriate educational provision from local resources. People should have a degree of power in extending facilities designed to serve their needs, particularly in colleges of further education, which should cater for the community.

Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination is a necessary lever to increase the power of minorities. It is predominantly those cases of the integration of individuals with physical or sensory handicaps or severe learning difficulties, especially Down's Syndrome, which are given as examples of successful integration. Parental participation in these cases is usually a significant factor in

their success (Burrows, 1982). There are other parents who lack the skill to manipulate the system. They tend to be

> Families who are socially disadvantaged who are less likely to have access to voluntary organisations or to printed information on provision and services. Parents who are members of ethnic minorities appear to be less likely to receive support or relevant information from national voluntary organisations. Single parent families may have heavy pressures in day-to-day life that inhibit their active involvement in assessment or in the school which their child attends. Parents who have themselves experienced educational failure are more likely to be found amongst the parents of children with moderate learning difficulties and with emotional and behavioural difficulties. They may need sensitive support and encouragement in order to become more involved.. (Rogers, 1986, p.28).

If the current trend of selection of specific acceptable categories for integration, and corresponding rejection of unacceptable categories, is to be combatted, it can only be through a policy of positive discrimination. If equal opportunities is to be anything more than meaningless rhetoric, a means must be provided to foster a more equitable level of participation. However, positive discrimination for minority groups is rarely introduced without opposition and derision. When Lambeth Council decided, in Summer 1986, to positively discriminate in favour of people with handicaps for council posts, they were met with critical hostility. As Kettle (1986) found, people with handicaps often have to prove themselves better than average to retain credibility.

Dispelling Stereotypes

An effective way to dispel stereotypes is to offer clear and digestible descriptions of different special needs, in language which avoids jargon and with emphasis upon the educational implications of specific handicaps. Such a guide has recently been produced for teachers in mainstream education by Male & Thompson (1985), which is straightforward and unambiguous. It is also useful to include to include brief case studies, which serve

to illustrate the person behind the label. Such studies feature in the current FEU publication, A College Guide: Meeting Special Educational Needs (Cooper, 1986), designed for all staff who work in post-16 training and further education, and offering a valuable stage in the process of demystifying the specialist. In an earlier publication on supporting students with severe physical disabilities, the NBHS (1983) had selected students with purely physical handicaps, many of whom were in higher rather than further education, thus presenting a distorted picture of the situation as it existed in special schools for the physically handicapped. However, that omission has been remedied in this recent publication where the differentiation between some categories of special need is shown to be tenuous. Spina bifida has been included in the section on Special needs arising from Physical Disability but with this proviso:

> ..For young people with brain damage arising from hydrocephalus, section 3 on learning difficulties offers some suggestions..Because they are often quite 'chatty' they may seem very able but their verbal skill often masks their learning difficulties..(Cooper, 1986, p.46)

The guide looks at what staff can do, rather than what the students with special needs cannot do.

> ..what is more important is to have a positive approach. There may be problems, but once problems are identified, the solution is already on the horizon..(Cooper, 1986, p.9)

This reinforces Biklen's conclusion that a positive approach to problem-solving was of critical importance in developing unconditional integration. However, the problem-solving is likely to produce initiatives to change curriculum content and teaching practice, and this requires LEA and institutional policy to implement and finance.

National Policy

The development of an integration policy, like th

development of comprehensive education, depends upon governmen policy affecting LEA policy which will in turn affec institutional policy. Unless policy is applied from the mos powerful authority through the national network, the minorit groups that are least powerful will suffer continued inequalit of opportunity. As Mongon (1983) noted, whilst many categorie of special need have acquired campaigners, there are n comparable pressure groups fighting for the rights of maladjuste children. From my experience in a specific integration scheme and my knowledge of other schemes, I suggest that lack o governmental and LEA policy leads to a reliance on individua initiative, a dependence on enlightened authority figures, and a emphasis on public relations to sustain goodwill. Thes imponderables dissipate energy and distort priorities, directin effort to harmonious relations with host establishments rathe than curriculum intiatives within a whole-institution policy.

The ambiguous attitude of government to comprehensiv education in Britain reflects lack of commitment and confusion o definition, for Booth indicates that

> ..the nature of comprehensive education has never been defined by government. Does it imply groupings mixed by ability? Does it require curricula adapted to the interests and backgrounds and cultures of pupils? Does it imply power sharing of education with the communities of the school?..(Booth, 1983, p.265)

Just as a placement model of integration is selective, limitin and contrary to equality of opportunities, so the maintenance c grammar schools alongside comprehensive in an LEA, and th preservation of a grammar school ethos within comprehensives mitigates against the model of integration which is trul unconditional. Policy has to demonstrate commitment, in order t be effective and create change. Response to Circular 1/8 suggested that DES opinion preferred the concept placement t

integration (Booth, 1983). The lack of commitment from the DES is reflected in LEA apathy, where many authorities are showing no inclination to change their policy on segregated schooling (ACE/Spastics Society, 1983).

A Whole-Authority Approach

Not only is policy diffused through contrasting LEA provision, the same children being integrated in one LEA and segregated in the neighbouring LEA, but it can be inconsistent within the LEA. Booth recorded the apparent commitment of the chief HMI who stated that

> ..We have no doubt of the importance of the whole authority approach, and HMI have had many discussion with LEAs concerning their present and future plans for response to the 1981 Act. (Booth, 1983, p264)

Yet, despite this commitment to a whole-authority approach, there are examples of LEA policy failure which created parental hostility in conservative boroughs (Hugill, 1984). In Redbridge, parents oppposed a return to a selective system, and insisted on the preservation of comprehensive education. The LEA reflected contrasting rather than cohesive attitudes, as grammar schools had existed alongside the comprehensives throughout.

Harefield did not offer a whole-authority approach to further education. It was because integration was seen as placement and applied piecemeal that the resultant balance was so distorted. Rather than impose an Equal Opportunities Policy on Fraser College, making it introduce a range of accessible courses, to attract more students of all abilities and all ages, Harefield created a new community college. This move disregarded the student population of Fraser College, who would have benefitted from curriculum innovation. Change is not just about the young person with special needs. It concerns altering the balance of power within educational institutions (DPE, 1984).

LEA policy has to direct change, precisely because it can be uncomfortable and challenging.

By allowing Fraser College to go its own way, and deny ease of curriculum access, Harefield was both betraying minority groups and creating more long-term upheavals. When the imbalance between Fraser and Spencer Colleges became intolerable, the LEA was forced into a clumsy reshuffling of courses which created maximum discord and anxiety. Long-term whole-authority planning should have seen both the need of a new college and a course re-distribution, in order to provide a sharing of resources. This lack of a whole-authority approach was evident at the 1984 HMI general inspection in Harefield when there was seen to be

> ..an urgent need, at LEA, school and classroom levels, for clarity and agreement about priorities and for the speedy development of programmes that clearly identify where responsibilities lie for specific action aimed at improving educational practice and raising standards. (HMI Report, 1984, p.35)

The importance of cohesive LEA policy on further education provision is stressed by Stowell, from his experience as director of the National Bureau for Handicapped Students for

> ..without regional planning, what is tending to happen now is that certain colleges that are renowned for their work with handicapped students - like, for example, Millbank College of Commerce and Bourneville College - are being increasingly used by their local education authorities as THE college for handicapped students. (Stowell, 1983, p.20)

They are becoming, in their words, a handicapped college and while none would wish to turn handicapped students away, they recognise that if the goal of integration is not to be sacrificed, there has to be a limit set somewhere. Other colleges need to open their doors too to handicapped students and while it is unrealistic to expect every college to accept every type of handicapped student, there has to be a compromise between every college accepting students with special needs (with

very little in the way of special provision), and a few colleges becoming college for the handicapped. This sharing of responsibility can only come about by regional planning, for traditional colleges like Fraser College are unlikely to change unless prompted by external, imposed policy.

Sharing a Philosophy

Sharing is of critical importance in the process of integration. A sharing of commitment to the ideal of 'equality of opportunity' benefits more than conventional special needs students and creates enhanced community participation. Students with special needs are integrated through being able to share in an overall provision, not a specialised one. If we recognise that special needs are not confined to specific categories of handicap but can refer to more general social needs, then a sharing of resources can be the only valid approach to integration as, for example, at Brixton College where

> ..it is perhaps an unexpected happening that a college in Brixton should be in the forefront in integrating handicapped people into society. It is less surprising, however, when you consider that the educational problems of some handicapped people are similar to those of people disadvantage in other ways. Brixton is an area with problems of many kinds from housing and unemployment to broken homes and poor educational background. Help with integration into a better way of living is thus part of the normal involvement of the teaching staff of Brixton College for Further Education..(Sturgeon, 1979, p.6).

Sharing means coming half-way to meet minority groups, so that the experience of success can then be shared. If students with learning difficulties or cultural differences are presented with a barrier of curricula rigidity, they are being effectively rejected. It is the business of colleges of further education, as community resources, to meet them halfway as

> ..An important aspect of this policy of integration is what we call the Reverse Bicycle Syndrome. When teaching someone to ride a bycycle you lead him to believe you are still holding the saddle when in fact

> you have ceased to do so. In our case we do the opposite, leading the student to believe that we have gradually withdrawn support and that he is eventually on his own, whereas we watch carefully and are ready to help when needed...(Sturgeon, 1979, p.8).

This emphasis on support towards greater autonomy is the key to successful integration. A sink or swim approach serves only to damage student morale and highten staff scepticism.

Sharing must include institutional participation and progression for all, which necessitates the provision of a means of access, but a

> major problem is that with so many colleges concentrating on higher level work that requires certain entry qualifications, the stairway that is needed is missing..(Sturgeon, 1979,. p.8).

Providing a stairway is a sharing of participation to all those prospective students who may otherwise be denied entry. Sharing means that the characteristic features of the minority group, or integrated individual, must be treated with respect. It would be regarded as impertinent if all individuals were assessed for their suitability of temperament before being admitted to educational provision. Yet should we ask of a student with physical disabilities:

> ..How sociable and extrovert is the child ? (Cannell, 1981, p.17)

I would hope that there has been a change in attitude since 1981, so that rather than expect the individual to have the qualities to assimilate satisfactorily we would treat all students with respect and create the most receptive environment possible, yet my experience at Fraser College suggests otherwise.

The media can help to change attitudes by including people with disabilities as regular members of soap operas and serials: the norm rather than the special subjects of documentaries (Mugridge, 1986). I found, for example, a Finnish comedy, in which a man with cerebral palsy plays the comic lead, both

refreshing and unsentimental (ITV, December, 1986).

Sharing means that the mainstream establishment must be ready to adapt and adopt new approaches. New approaches like CPVE are essential for curriculum innovation in comprehensive and further education (Brown, 1985). A new approach to teaching method, focusing on realism and relevance, will benefit both students with special needs and mainstream (McGinty & Green, 1981; Grimwood, 1983). Change in society and education is not necessarily damaging for there are many features of normality which are abhorant and not to be emulated. The less attractive features of 'normal' schools must be challenged in this process for sharing includes an exchange of influences in which the special commands equal status with the normal. Sharing means facilitating social participation so that students with mobility problems are not restricted. It makes a nonsense of equality of opportunity if the basic features of student life are denied to specific students, where their only crime is disability. At the University of London Institute of Education, for example, trainee teachers who have mobility problems have the greatest difficulty in participating in Student Union activites because access is restricted and adapted toilet facilities non-existent (Walsh, 1986). They are thus penalised for their personal tragedy and prevented from attaining the power of Union office, which could lead to change in the system.

Sharing means having a fair share of employment opportunities and promotion prospects. It is a gross hypocricy that students with physical and sensory handicaps are being integrated with enthusiasm, as an acceptable group, whilst teachers with disabilities are not:

> ..People at the top in positions of authority go around pontificating but when it comes to the crunch they don't

> support the theories they put forward - they just don't want to know.. To be rejected by the very people you have worked with is a very bitter pill to swallow.. (a woman who became disabled after 20 years as a teacher, from Kettle, 1986, p.19)

Such rejection came not only from within the institution but from LEA level, as Kettle says of one teacher that

> ..he thought he could return to teaching, his deputy headmaster thought he could return to teaching, but others, outside of the school involved, thought otherwise. The question is, who were in the better position to make a judgement? (Kettle, 1986, p.20)

Another teacher who found problems with employment, because of disability, said that

> ..the local authority was nervous, afraid of the unknown, seeing problems where none existed..(Kettle, 1986, p.27)

Was it fear of the unknown and anxiety which prompted Harefield Education Authority to be so reluctant to employ Molly Francis? How was their Equal Opportunities Policy reflected here? Her inability to continue as a course tutor was entirely due to environmental restrictions, not personal skill. How could she be said to enjoy equality of opportunity when promotion prospects were hampered by buildings, regardless of her academic attributes? What Integration Policy merits these feelings, expressed by teachers with disabilities:

> ...If they are disabled before entering the profession I would dissuade them as much as possible as in the present climate it can only lead to sadness and frustration... Unless a disabled person is extremely lucky, teaching is a difficult profession to enter...(Kettle, 1986, p.27)

How can the process of integration be regarded as anything other than a sham if professional status is not shared by all suitably qualified teachers, with or without disabilities? Harefield was surely not the only LEA to be operating an Integration Scheme for students with physical handicaps whilst resisting the inclusion of a lecturer in a wheelchair amongst the

staff. This hypocricy characterises the weaknesses of the placement model of integration. It can offer a semblence of commitment, without planning for change. This is an arid approach to what should be a fertile development.

Appendix

A. Fraser College of Technology.
Handicapped Students and College Policy.

B. Spencer College.
Special Needs Policy Statement.

C. Spencer College.
Equal Opportunities Policy.

D. London Borough of Harefield.
Education Service.
Equal Opportunities in Harefield: An Education Service Policy Statement.

E. Department of Education and Science.
Report by HM Inspectors on Educational Provision and Response in some Harefield Schools.
LEA: London Borough of Harefield.

Appendix A.

Fraser College of Technology 24.2.1984

Handicapped Students and College Policy

Introduction

1.1 In 1981 the Governors established a pilot scheme for the integration of handicapped students as recommended by Warnock. Arrangements were made for the appointment of a Handicapped Students Liaison Officer and the first intake of students on the pilot scheme was enrolled in the 1981/82 session. An Inter Authority-College Working Party co-ordinated events.

1.2 Drawing upon the experience gained, the College carried out a number of alterations and adaptations to building designed to improve access and provide better personal facilities for handicapped students.

College Policy

2.1 Handicapped students will be integrated into full time/part time courses in accordance with their educational qualifications and expectations, the ultimate aim being to full functional integration. For some part-time and link students access to the College will provide opportunities for social and location integration which are recognised as being stage towards achieving functional integration.

2.2 The College will also work in close association with Spencer College to provide a complementary and supportive programme of courses likely to be of direct benefit to Handicapped Students.

2.3 The premises will be maintained in a manner so as to meet in full any statutory requirements/regulations concerning the handicapped or disabled.

Implementation

Role of the Handicapped Students Liaison Officer (HSLO)

3.1 This member of staff will have a crucial part to play in the success translation of the above policy on a day-to-day basis. The HSLO will act as a personal tutor for all Handicapped Students, and will arrange for extra tuition, as appropriate, with the relevant Head of Department(s).

Role of Departments

3.2 Each Department will co-operate, within available resources, to provide full access to its courses making deficiencies or recommendation known to the HSLO.

Role of the Vice-Principal

3.3 The Vice-Principal will form a sub-committee of the College Board to discuss specifically the welfare needs of Handicapped Students. The Vice-Principal will continue to Chair the Inter Authority-College Working Party on Handicapped Students until such time as its work is completed.

The HSLO will report direct to the Vice-Principal on matters relating to Handicapped Students.

Appendix B

Spencer College

May 1984

Special Needs Policy Statement

Introduction

It was not until the Warnock Report of 1978 that real progress was made and the place of Further Education was included. This recommended abandoning the previous rigid categories and introducing the concept of Special Educational Needs:

> To be seen not in terms of particular disability which a person may be judged to have, but in relation to everything about him/her - his/her abilities as well as his/her disabilities.

To help the education of these students it was recommended that:-

a) Access to the curriculum of ordinary establishments should be made available by means of special equipment, facilities and resources; modification of the physical environment or specialist teaching techniques.

OR

b) The provision of a Special or Modified Curriculum.

In each case particular attention had to be made to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place.

Here for the first time were fundamental recommendations to change the whole concept of educating handicapped people, i.e. labels like cripple, imbecile and feeble-minded were not longer acceptable.

Terminology does present a real problem and labels are inclined to stick. It is far more beneficial to try and view the student as a whole rather than be influenced by a label that may have been with them since birth.

Accountability and Status

As an inter-departmental provision, the SL for Special Needs is accountable to the Principal of Spencer College through the direction of the Vice-Principal in his capacity as leader of the Inter-Departmental Staff Team.

Special Needs provision is available in all academic departments, the Library and Learning Resources Centre, administrative and other appropriate services of Spencer College as well as support and training to all staff.

Courses

In working with students with special learning needs the Aims and Objectives of Spencer College must be maintained.

Courses are offered either exclusively for Special Needs Students or for their integration within established courses with support available for the staff.

It is important to clarify issues when selecting a course so that emotional aspects do not cloud the educational ones. The individual development of the student must always be the priority.

It must be remembered that the benefits of educating able-bodied and Special Needs students together is in itself something of great positive value.

Appendix C.

Spencer College

Equal Opportunities Policy 1985

We aim in particular to provide courses and programmes for groups in the community who are, for a variety of reasons, disadvantaged and who need new opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills. The college programmes are particularly concerned to cater for the specialist needs of ethnic groups, the disabled, the unemployed, unwaged, women and girls..

..If any student is seen whose behaviour is deemed as either racist, sexist or demeaning to students with special needs, then she/he can be excluded from the college..

Appendix D.

London Borough of Harefield Education Service

Equal Opportunities in Harefield: An Education Service Policy Statement

Equal Opportunities in Employment 1985

Harefield Council's Policy Statement

This Council declares its intention to become an equal opportunities employer. The Council is opposed to discrimination on any grounds. In particular we oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, age, religion, and discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the unemployed and people with disabilities. The aim of our policy is to prevent racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism and other forms of discrimination against people from these groups, and to take affirmative action to ensure that they are represented as employees in all departments and at all levels. In particular, we are committed to action to ensure that the ability and potential for the job are the only criteria, and that this Council through all policies and actions does achieve an accurate reflection in its workforce of the community it serves.

Institutional Arrangements and Resources

The Education Committee, recognises that equal opportunities in provision will not be achieved by passive institutional arrangements, and that positive steps need to be taken whether defined in relation to access to particular educational experiences, educational welfare provisions, other support services, or employment.

The nature and content of the service provided should actively seek to meet the needs of all members of the community

on an equal opportunities basis. The Education Committee will therefore keep under continuous review its own policies, practices and procedures, and will develop guidelines to assist similar processes across all areas of potential discrimination within educational institutions and in support services.

Each educational establishment and service is expected to draw up its own statements of policy to combat discriminatory attitudes and practices, whether these are expressed by individuals or through institutional practices.

Appendix E.

Department of Education and Science

Report by HM Inspectors on Educational Provision and Response In Some Harefield Schools

LEA: London Borough of Harefield 1984

Introduction

3. Harefield is a small authority, but within its borders there exist some wide and marked social variations. The west of the Borough is the more prosperous part; the east and the centre contain areas of social disadvantage. For example, one third of households in the central part of Harefield are privately rented and between a fifth and a quarter of these are without exclusive use of basic amenities. In some ways the social composititon of Harefield is not unlike that of Greater London as a whole, for example in the socio-economic structure of its population However, there are also some distinctive features of its socia structure which have a bearing on the provision of education.

4. The unemployment rate in Harefield was 14.9% in Januar 1984, compared with 10.8% for the Greater London area as a whole The unemployment rates for young people in Harefield are highe than the Borough average. Among those 16-19 year olds not i full-time education, 30% of males and 23% of females have bee unemployed for between one and three years. There are n statistics available to show the extent of unemployment amon young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Harefield.

26. The overall picture in the primary schools visited is one c work which lacks sparkle and which fails to make appropriat demands on pupils who consequently tend to under-achieve. Thi can not be ascribed to lack of resources. It is due in part to

lack of clear and consistent thinking by the LEA and by individual schools, about curriculum and organisation.

29. The intakes of the schools tended to reflect the social composition of their immediate neighbourhoods. As with the primary schools, the secondary schools tend to serve a wide variety of ethnic groups. There is no evidence to suggest that any ethnic group is disproportionately represented in lower ability classes, or in non-examination courses. The fact seems to be that many pupils in these schools, whatever their ethnic or social origins, are likely to achieve less than they might.

31. In the Borough as a whole the percentage of fifth year pupils gaining no graded result was 18% against 10% nationally; 42% of fifth year pupils achieved one or more GCE grades A-C or CSE grade 1 (the higher grades) compared with 52% nationally; and 11% gained five or more higher grades compared with 23% in the country as a whole. Taking account of socio-economic factors, examination results in Harefield were below the levels that might be expected.*

*DES Statistical Bulletin 16/83

39. There is no formal LEA induction programme for new entrants to teaching, but this is offset to some extent by the schools own efforts in this direction. However, new teachers are not given time for induction programmes on the timetables; induction work has to be carried out at the end of a school day. This may play a part in reducing the effectiveness of the LEA's numerically ample teaching force.

42. One school had been designated a community school; there were some promising developments here, although there was also uncertainty in the school about the LEA's policy concerning the

nature of community schools, including for instance: regarding the particular curricula they should offer; how staffing contracts should be designed; and how best to manage dual-use facilities.

46. At the moment there are about 100 secondary school pupils working on CGLI 365 courses at either Spencer College or at Fraser College of Technology. College staff need to be more clearly aware of the backgrounds and previous experiences of the pupils if the full value of these courses is to be realised.

The Special Schools and Tutorial Units

47. The Authority offers a wide and varied set of opportunities in ordinary schools for children with special needs of one kind or another. In addition, there are six special schools: four which operate independently and two which work in collaboration with ordinary schools.

48. Harefield also maintains a school for physically handicapped pupils a number of whom, while on the nominal roll of this school, are integrated into the life and work of one of the secondary schools visited. This integration is commendable in intent and shows promise in its effects, although the toilet accommodation for these physically handicapped pupils is poorly situated. Some of the administrative complexities arising from the dual status of these pupils (on the roll of one school while working in another) appear to result in unnecessary anomalies regarding capitation and the disposition of resources.

49. There is a most unusual arrangement for hearing impaired pupils in Harefield: a dispersed special school. The arrangements made possible by this school are varied and flexible. For example, pupils may be taught in their own local

primary or secondary school while being given daily help from teachers of the hearing impaired who are based at the special school. Other pupils divide their time between ordinary schools and the dispersed school. It appeared that these suitably staffed arrangements worked well and that hearing impaired pupils were accepted readily in ordinary classes with the teachers there paying appropriate attention to their needs.

50. Harefield operates three tutorial units (with a maximum of 12 pupils each): one for children with a history of school refusal; another for pupils over the age of 15 who are felt unlikely to integrate into the life of the secondary schools; and a third for older pupils who have been suspended from school and are felt unlikely to return.

55. The work of the advisory service has not always been helped by a tradition of advisers working independently, which prevailed until recently and which may have inhibited the development of systemic procedures for identifying in-service training needs and designing a continuing programme to meet them. The evidence from the visits to the schools suggests strongly that many of the teachers are in need of professional assistance with regard to such matters as classroom management and the design of appropriate schemes of work. Since some advisers appear to visit schools more than others it follows that teachers working in some areas of the curriculum, and in some schools, may not have their professional needs identified with the requisite speed and clarity. It is a high priority for Harefield's advisory service to develop a more systematic framework for identifying such needs.

69. There is an urgent need, at LEA, school and classroo

levels, for clarity and agreement about priorities and for the speedy development of programmes that clearly identify where responsibilities lie for specific action aimed at improving educational practice and raising standards.

70. More particularly, the secondary advisers need to develop an in-service programme, comparable to that provided for primary and pre-school teachers, that focusses on such matters as classroom management, particularly in relation to mixed-ability groupings, and on the differentiation of teaching to cater for pupils of differents ages and abilities.

76. Like schools elsewhere, those in Harefield have to meet the educational demands currently made on the education service and also the challenges created by changing circumstances and developing national expectations. In these circumstances schools cannot stand still, and those inspected in Harefield have not only to resolve their problems in the interests of their present pupils, but need to do so to provide a sound basis of practice and achievement upon which to build necessary changes and development.

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